

SMITH'S

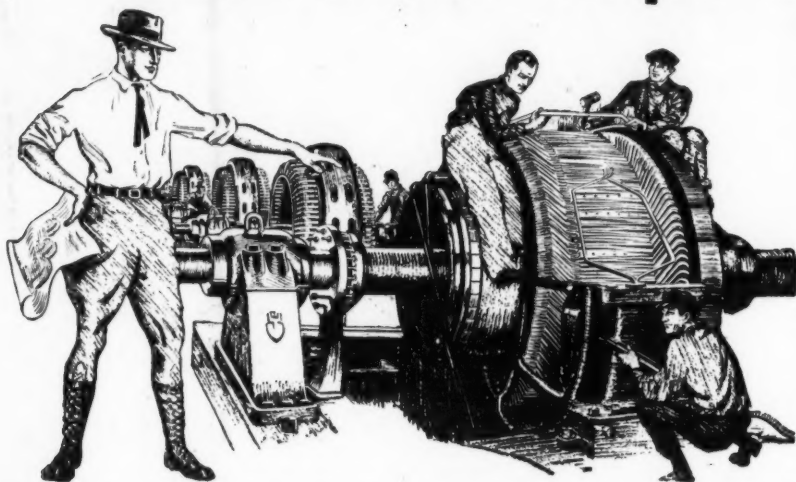
MAGAZINE

May-1921
20 Cents



*J. Storer Clouston
Margaret Pedler
John Lawrence Ward
Katharine Haviland Taylor
Arthur Tuckerman
Christine Whiting Parmenter
Elizabeth Newport Hepburn
Dorothea Brande
Madame Renée Lonquille*

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City..... State.....

Occupation or Business.....

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No. 1

SMITH'S MAGAZINE

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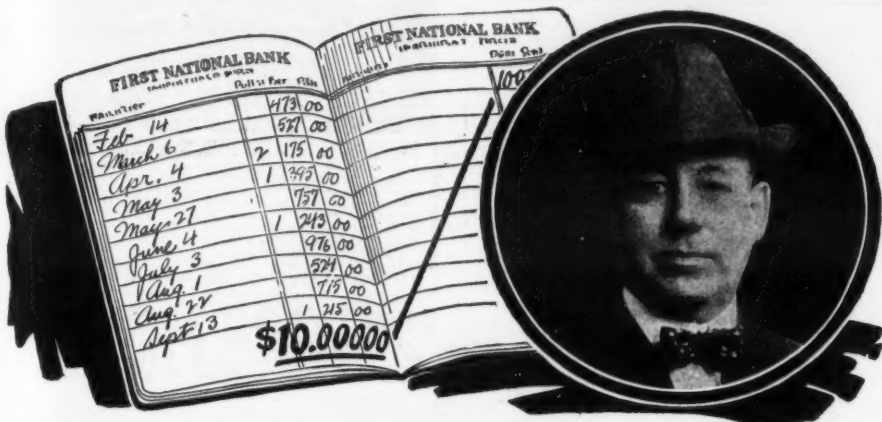
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Continued on second page following



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Dept. 4-E Chicago, Ill.

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PART OF CONTENTS

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SMITH'S MAGAZINE

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Number 1

Mr. Essington *at Large*

By J. Storer Clouston

Author of "The Lunatic at Large," "Simon," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. VAN BUREN

The beginning of a rollicking mystery story which
will run through four numbers of SMITH'S.

CHAPTER I.

MR. PERRY, of Bannerman, Perry & Haines, gazed for a moment at the visiting card which the clerk had just handed in. He was an elderly young man, very grave and solemn for his six-and-thirty years, thin-faced and carefully dressed, an ideal-looking adviser in a delicate matter. The card was his brother's, "introducing my friend, Mr. Ridley," and to Mr. Perry it appeared to be a dubious introduction. His brother was a spirited young gentleman who frequented the more western regions of London, and it seemed unlikely that he would send his friends to the family office unless they had got into a very serious scrape indeed.

"Show him in," said Mr. Perry briefly, and composed his face into an expression of even greater austerity than usual.

The door opened, and there entered not one, but two young gentlemen. The first was a little above medium height, slim but very well set up, immaculately dressed, and even to Mr. Perry's critical eye, decidedly pleasing to look upon. His features were good,

his mouth firm and businesslike, and his eyes quiet, clear, and steady.

"I am Ridley," said he, "and this is my friend Mr. Toothill."

The second young man smiled affably and remarked that it was a "devilish warm day." He was probably of nearly the same height as Ridley, but so broad that he looked decidedly shorter. His face was ingenuous and good-humored, pug-nosed, genial, obstinate, but not at all intellectual; his attire reached the very limit of the very latest fashion.

"Sit down," said Mr. Perry, and then after one quick, shrewd glance at both his visitors decided it would save time to come straight to the point.

"Got into a scrape?" he inquired with his nearest approach to a genial manner.

"No," said Ridley, "not in the least."

Mr. Perry glanced again at each of them in turn and raised his brows a trifle.

"I may remind you that I am a criminal solicitor," said he.

"I know you are," said Ridley. "That's why we have come to you. We want your advice."

For a single instant there showed through the young man's restrained, well-bred voice a hint of some strong emotion, and Mr. Perry pricked up his ears.

"Ah!" said he in quite a different manner. "Well, what's the trouble?"

"I'm afraid it is rather a long story," said Ridley, "but I had better make things clear and begin at the beginning."

"Much better," murmured the lawyer.

"This summer, in fact only about a couple of months ago, I was traveling on the Continent."

"I was with him," put in Mr. Tothill.

"I should have said that we were traveling," Ridley corrected himself. "We began with Switzerland and meant to go a good bit farther east, but in a hotel at Lucerne we met a Madame d'Albert, a lady who keeps a sort of finishing school for girls in Paris."

"I have heard of her," said Mr. Perry, "a very high-priced establishment, I believe."

"Yes, so I should think. She had taken two or three of her girls with her for a holiday before they came home, and one of them was a Miss Beatrix Staynes. I—er—well, I became engaged to her."

Mr. Perry smiled slightly.

"That is a very brief account of the transaction," said he. "If any part of your subsequent story hinges upon it, you had better give me a few more details."

"She was very beautiful and very charming," said Ridley simply, "and I fell in love with her." He suddenly smiled for an instant and added: "Personally I don't see how any one could help it."

"No more do I," said Tothill with a sigh, and then, seeing the lawyer's eye turn in his direction, he explained with engaging candor: "I fell in love

with her, too, but Philip was the lucky bird. But that accounts for my bein' here with him, as you'll hear in a minute."

"Unfortunately she was very rich," Ridley went on.

"Unfortunately?" repeated the lawyer sharply.

"Well, I mean that she is very much richer than I am or ever will be, and one loathes the idea of fortune hunting. Besides, I am not sure that it may not account for what has happened since. She was an orphan, I should say, with no near relations, and two guardians. Beyond an allowance stipulated in her father's will, they have absolute control of her money until she is twenty-five. In fact, if she marries before then without their consent, she loses all."

"Do you know what her fortune amounts to?"

"Madame d'Albert spoke of twenty thousand pounds a year, but very likely she exaggerated."

The lawyer nodded.

"Very possibly. Still, it is clear that she is extremely wealthy. And what is the attitude of her guardians toward her engagement?"

"You can judge of the attitude of one of them from what I am going to tell you," said Ridley with some significance. "The time we actually became engaged was only three weeks ago. She was coming home to England so soon that we decided to wait until she arrived in London to see the guardians. A little later she told me in a letter that after all she had written to break the news, but that was just before she started and there has been no time for me to hear the answer—that's to say, to hear it from Beatrix."

"I came home ahead of her, went down to the country to see my people for a day or two, and then came back to town and waited for her. Of course we were corresponding regularly, and it was all arranged that she was to



“‘Is one of you gentlemen Mr. Ridley?’ he asked.”

arrive at Charing Cross three days ago by the Continental train getting in at nine in the evening." At this point Ridley paused and looked at the lawyer very straight and frankly, while the lines of his mouth set firmer than ever. "This is where the strange part of the story begins," said he, "and if you think anything wants clearing up you can ask me as I go along."

"In that case," replied Mr. Perry, "I should just like to ask you whether Miss Staynes was traveling to England by herself or with friends."

"She was going to travel with a friend, another girl from Madame d'Albert's, and then she wrote that she had changed her plans. She was getting a maid, she said, and was traveling home with her. First of all, I thought of going over to escort her—I wish to Heaven I had!—but both of us were particularly anxious not to do anything her guardians might disapprove of, and as they had made this arrangement about getting her a maid and altering her plans, I decided not to go over, but simply to meet her at Charing Cross. I got to the station pretty early, and in a few minutes, much to my surprise, Mr. Toothill turned up."

Mr. Toothill, finding himself thus the center of interest for the moment, looked exceedingly serious, and in a voice which he apparently desired to be melancholy, confessed:

"I honestly couldn't help it, Mr. Perry. I know it sounds like pushin' my nose in where it wasn't sort of expected. In fact, it *was* pushin' my nose in; but the truth is I wrote to her asking if there was any chance of my seein' her again—perfectly platonically of course, perfectly platonically. She wrote such a kind note back, damned kind. And so I came down to meet her. Rotten thing to do, I know quite well; still, just as well I came, as things turned out."

The ghost of a smile flickered for an instant over Mr. Perry's grave face.

"I quite understand," he said. "Well, what happened next?"

"We paced the platform together," Ridley continued, "until close on the time when the train was due. By then, of course, a lot of other people had collected and so we never noticed where the man appeared from or whether he had been hanging about for long; in fact, the first thing we noticed was a voice at our back saying:

"'Beg pardon, sir.'"

"We turned around and saw a small, weaselly-looking fellow in a bowler hat that looked a little too big for him, with a narrow face and uncommon sharp eyes set rather close together. His voice was hoarse and a little hushed and confidential, and his manner was most respectful.

"'Is one of you gentlemen Mr. Ridley?' he asked.

"I said I was, and he handed me a folded slip of paper.

"'This note's for you, sir,' said he.

"Outside simply was written, 'for Philip.' Inside was this message:

"Arriving Victoria nine-fifteen instead of Charing Cross. Meet me there. BEATRIX.

"The first thing I did was look at my watch. It was nearly nine o'clock. Then I handed the note to Toothill, and asked the man:

"'How did you get this?'

"'Came in a letter to Miss Scott,' said he.

"'Who is she?' I asked.

"'Friend of Miss Staynes, sir. Miss Staynes asked her to 'ave it sent on to you.'

"'But why didn't I get it sooner?' I asked him.

"'Can't say, sir,' said he perfectly glibly and naturally. 'I made all the 'aste I could.'

"At that moment Charles—that's to say, Toothill—reminded me that we

had no time to lose if we meant to get to Victoria at nine-fifteen. And on top of that the man in a very brisk, obliging way asked:

"Get you a cab, sir?"

"I am telling all these details, Mr. Perry, to show you how artfully the thing was done and how I was rushed into a decision with no time to think it over. I was vaguely suspicious from the very start, and I could have kicked myself afterward for falling into the trap, but there was that note, and I remembered that there was, or had been, a Miss Scott, a friend of Beatrix's at Madame d'Albert's. What could I do?"

Mr. Perry was listening very intently now. He merely nodded and asked:

"So you got into the cab?"

"We did, and drove at full speed to Victoria."

"Very natural. And then what happened?"

"The moment we stopped I leaped out and asked the first porter which was the platform for the Continental train."

"There's no Continental trains at Victoria to-night," said he."

Mr. Perry sat up sharply.

"What!" he exclaimed, and then gave a little whistle. "Well," he added, falling back into his dry, watchful manner, "what did you do then?"

"We came back to Charing Cross at a gallop, and got there just too late. Miss Staynes had arrived; we found the porter who had put her boxes on a cab. They were in charge of a maid, and the porter swore that a small man in a bowler hat had helped pile them on the cab and then jumped in beside the maid. They seemed in a great hurry, he said. A girl answering to the description of Miss Staynes had spoken to the maid for a moment and then driven away in a hansom. She was met by a tall man in a fur coat, and he went with her. We saw them

leaving as we arrived at the station."

"You actually saw them?"

"We couldn't be sure at the moment. It was quite dark and we only caught a glimpse as they passed under a lamp. I couldn't believe it was really Beatrix! But it must have been."

"Did you recognize the man she was with?"

Ridley shook his head.

"We scarcely saw his face. I couldn't even swear to him if I met him again."

"Did you expect her to be met by any one else but yourself?" asked Mr. Perry.

"She told me in the last letter I got from her that she had informed her guardian when she would arrive, but added that I was to meet her and take her to a hotel or wherever he suggested. But I had no time to hear what he said in answer to that."

"Who is this guardian?"

"As I told you, there are really two, but the only one that counts and who corresponds with her and looks after her affairs and so on is Sir Joshua Horsham, a big financial magnate, I believe."

"Of Horsham & Stukley?" Mr. Perry seemed interested and impressed. "I know the firm, and Sir Joshua, too, very well by repute, exceedingly well. In fact, Horsham & Stukley is one of the best-known firms in the city."

"So I understand," said Ridley, "and the very first thing I thought of was to go and see him immediately."

"You couldn't have done better," said Mr. Perry.

"I knew from Beatrix that Sir Joshua is a widower and lives nowadays at his place in Berkshire most of the time. When he is in town he stays at the Regent's Club in Pall Mall, so we went straight to his club from the station, on the chance of finding him. The porter first told me confidently he was in the club, and went to look for



"She was met by a tall man in a fur coat, and he went with her. We saw them leaving as we arrived at the station."

him. Then he came back and said he had been mistaken."

"Deuced fishy, I call it!" observed Mr. Toothill.

"What was your next step?" asked the lawyer.

"I went down next day to Sir Joshua's place," said Ridley, "but I found it closed, and the housekeeper in charge either couldn't or wouldn't tell me anything. I noticed, however, that she showed no surprise at seeing me. Then I wrote to Sir Joshua and told him exactly what had happened."

"Have you got his answer?"

"It came this morning. He refuses his consent to my marriage with Beatrix and forbids any correspondence with her. I had written to her at the same time, and as I knew no other address I had to address my letter care of Sir Joshua. He returned it, unopened, in his own."

"And not a word about what has become of Beatrix!" exclaimed Toothill indignantly.

Ridley merely confirmed this by a quiet nod and a tightening of his lips.

"But surely, Mr. Ridley," answered the lawyer, "you can set your mind at rest on one point. You told Sir Joshua of Miss Staynes' disappearance, and he made no comment. That implies she is safely in her guardian's charge."

"Is she?" said Ridley, and his voice, though quiet and controlled, was tense with anxiety. "That man who met her was not Sir Joshua!"

"You are certain?"

"Perfectly, both from our glimpse of him and the guard's description; he was too tall and too young. In fact, it certainly was *not* Sir Joshua Horsham."

The lawyer was silent for a moment, and then he said:

"One must face every fact, Mr. Ridley, and one fact—unpleasant though it

must be to you—is that she herself wrote the note which sent you to the wrong station.”

“It was a forgery! I am sure of that now,” exclaimed Ridley. “The writing deceived me at the time, but I have studied it carefully since, and I am quite certain Beatrix never wrote it herself.”

Mr. Perry opened his eyes.

“But that would imply a very discreditable plot indeed, a plot with a certain criminal element.”

“It does, and that is why I feel so anxious.”

Again Mr. Perry thought for a moment.

“I don’t know whether it is possible to obtain an accurate estimate of a young lady’s character from her fiancé, but it would be of considerable assistance if it were possible.”

“I can assure you of one thing,” said Ridley emphatically. “Beatrix may have her faults—I suppose she has, though I haven’t learned them yet—but deceit is the very last thing she is capable of. In fact she is almost too simple and honest and confiding. She believes people too easily and is far too slow to suspect them of bad motives or even of ordinary, selfish, worldly motives. Madame d’Albert impressed that on me. ‘Never deceive Beatrix,’ she said, ‘for she will find it very difficult even to understand why you did it.’”

“She is like an angel!” said Charles Toothill earnestly. “I mean so far as being capable of being stuffed up by any damned yarn goes, and never even pulling your leg herself, or anyhow only pulling it gently.”

“I am afraid I can only take your word as to the nature of angels,” said the lawyer, “but Madame d’Albert’s evidence—though only hearsay—is undoubtedly important. In fact, it seems to me tolerably convincing.”

“And perhaps you can imagine how

I feel with such a confiding girl in the hands of the people who forged that letter,” said Ridley.

“I do realize; yes,” said Mr. Perry. “But at the same time she has made no complaint, and she is in the hands of her own legal guardians——” He broke off and asked suddenly: “But what about the other guardian?”

“Ah!” said Ridley. “That was the idea I had in my mind—to go and see him about it.”

“Who is he?” asked the lawyer.

“A Mr. Francis Mandell-Essington.”

CHAPTER II.

“Mr. Mandell-Essington?” repeated the lawyer. “The name seems familiar. Who is this gentleman?”

“I believe he is a man of means,” said Ridley, “with a place somewhere in the country; but the fact is Beatrix has never seen him or had any correspondence with him, so that he was a mere name to her. Sir Joshua was the guardian she always spoke of to me, but Essington seems to be our one good card now, so we must try to play him—if it is possible.”

Something in his voice as he said the last words seemed to catch Mr. Perry’s attention.

“If it is possible? Have you any reason to think he also is concerned in this—shall we say kidnaping exploit?”

“At first,” said Ridley, “I wondered if the man in the fur coat could be Essington, but if Sir Joshua is to be believed that at least can’t be the case. In my letter to him I dropped a hint—quite politely—that I thought of referring to Mr. Mandell-Essington also. Here are the words Sir Joshua used in his answer.” He took a letter from his pocket, and read aloud:

“With reference to your suggestion of consulting Mr. Mandell-Essington, I regret to say that Mr. Essington has had a very severe nervous breakdown and will not be in a con-

dition to deal with any matters of business for some considerable time to come. As he is living under medical care, it will be useless for you to attempt to enter into any correspondence with him, and, of course, quite impossible to see him. In consequence I am Miss Staynes' only acting guardian, although I may add that if Mr. Essington were in his usual mental health I am quite certain his views would be mine."

"That is awkward," commented Mr. Perry.

"If it is true," said Ridley. "But I don't believe a single word Sir Joshua tells me until I have discovered for myself whether he is telling the truth or not."

Mr. Perry shook his head.

"It would be a very dangerous statement to make about a man—to say he was suffering from mental trouble and under medical restraint—unless it were true. It would amount to a serious libel."

"Oh, I don't say that it isn't probably partially true. But what I won't believe unless I can prove it is that Essington is so bad that he can't help me, anyhow, to find Beatrix."

"Well," admitted the lawyer, "it is certainly worth while making inquiries. Do you know where Mr. Essington is living, or being kept, at present?"

"I don't," said Ridley, "and that is one matter in which I hoped you might help me. How can one find out?"

Mr. Perry looked thoughtful for a moment. Then he said:

"While we have been talking, it has come back to me where I heard of Mr. Mandell-Essington before. A relative of his is a client of ours and I make no doubt I could discover his address in that way if I felt justified in asking it as a favor."

"Please do!" exclaimed the two young men simultaneously.

"What steps do you mean to take if I get you this information?" asked the lawyer cautiously.

"I mean to go down and see Mr.

Essington, if I can possibly get at him," said Ridley.

"And you'll take me with you this time?" cried Toothill. "My dear old fellow, I'm simply burstin' to *do* something!" He turned to Mr. Perry and explained ingenuously, "I'm no great shakes at thinkin' and plannin', but I am really quite useful at *doin'* things. That's my lay, the active line. And if it comes to breakin' into this place where Essington is bein' kept and fetchin' the fellow out—well, two will manage the job better than one."

"My dear sir!" exclaimed the lawyer. "The place is quite likely a private asylum of some kind, and I certainly shall do nothing to assist you in any such performance. You would render yourselves liable to very heavy penalties indeed, and so should I, if I gave you any countenance in the matter."

Philip Ridley smiled, and his face became very engaging when a smile lit it.

"I shall only take you, Charles," he said, "if you guarantee to do exactly what you are told."

"I shall, I promise you!" said Charles. "I swear to do exactly what I'm told!"

Ridley turned to Mr. Perry.

"I can guarantee, Mr. Perry, that we shan't break in anywhere. I shall try to *get* in, of course, but that is different. And if Mr. Essington is really under restraint, I promise you we shall make no attempt to get him out of it."

For a few moments the lawyer considered the matter.

"Before I do anything at all, Mr. Ridley," he said at length, "I must see that you clearly understand and realize the whole situation, so far as it is known at present. In the first place, Miss Staynes is a ward under age, in her guardian's charge; at least that must be the assumption on the facts so far as we have them. You have no



He beheld an entire stranger dodging, it appeared, somewhat cautiously through the trees. Mr. Essington perceived him to be a decidedly young gentleman and of a very agreeable appearance.

legal right to interfere with any arrangements he may have made, even though you consider yourself badly treated."

"Surely I can try to see her?"

"You can try, by lawful means, of course. But so long as she remains silent and makes no complaint, your position is unfortunately weak."

"Weak!" exclaimed Charles. "What, after that little blighter in the bowler sent us to the wrong station—deliberately?"

"I am telling you your position in the eye of the law. Of course, if any constraint is being put upon Miss Staynes, or any advantage of her is being taken in any way, the question becomes entirely different. But I can

hardly imagine Sir Joshua Horsham doing anything of that kind. What motive could he possibly have? He can't want to secure her money for his own ends. He is an extremely wealthy man."

"I am wondering all the time," said Ridley in a low voice.

"But there is another aspect of the matter that must be remembered," continued Mr. Perry. "If you were to find her and run away with her without her guardians' consent, *you* would be robbing her of her money."

"I've thought of that. I don't want all that money, but to rob her——"

"Precisely. You must not do that. In short, you must either wait till she is twenty-five——"

"Seven years!" cried Ridley. "Oh, we simply can't!"

"Or else you must get her guardians on your side. And if you are really judicious and careful, there can be no harm in trying to see Mr. Mandell-Essington, or at all events in discovering whether Sir Joshua's statement is literally accurate, or whether he may not be capable, either now or very shortly, of taking some step to clear this business up."

"You agree then that he is our best card?"

"Your only card in the meantime; if, as you say, it is possible to play him."

"We'll have a rare good try!" said Ridley. "And you will get me his address, Mr. Perry?"

"Yes, I think I can guarantee to let you have it to-night."

"Then to-morrow," exclaimed Charles, "we may actually be doing something!"

"Do it very carefully," advised the lawyer.

CHAPTER III.

On a fine September afternoon Doctor Jenkinson opened the door in the wall at the foot of his private garden and passed through into the grounds of that select mental sanitarium known as "The Retreat." There were twenty-four ladies and gentlemen—the number was never exceeded—each with his private attendant. All were suffering from the pace at which they lived at the end of the nineteenth century, and more especially from the pace at which each individual life had been whirling. They had sought and found repose in "The Retreat," and they had paid Doctor Jenkinson a very handsome return for the privilege. Or perhaps it would be more generally accurate to say that their relatives sought repose by placing the twenty-four in seclusion, and frequently even themselves paid to secure this respite.

"It will be a very happy home for him—or her—I understand," the relatives were in the habit of saying.

"As happy as I can make it," said Doctor Jenkinson, who was a cautious man.

On this particular afternoon, hardly had he replaced the patent key in his pocket and set off down the path which led from his private demesne, when he became aware of two gentlemen approaching him, with a third figure some thirty paces behind. One of these gentlemen was youthful, clean, and pleasant looking, and with a certain professional briskness in his manner. The experienced in such matters could have guessed at once that he was Doctor Jenkinson's assistant. The figure behind also clearly belonged to the staff of the establishment, though on a lower plane than the young doctor. His upright figure, broad shoulders, and quietly watchful air marked him at a glance as one of the twenty-four's private attendants.

The gentleman who walked beside the assistant was, however, of quite a different appearance. He was in the young thirties, tall and fair, and with an indefinable air of distinction stamped both upon his agreeable features and his graceful figure. He wore a long, very fashionably cut overcoat, of a yellow hue with a velvet collar to match, and on his head—rather to one side of it—a slouch felt hat which he raised very politely as they met the doctor.

"Doctor," he said, "we have come to greet you with a very gratifying bit of news. Thanks to your truly marvelous treatment, I am practically cured!"

High though the compliment was, and gracefully as it was paid, Doctor Jenkinson eyed with what seemed a somewhat dubious expression both the upraised hat and the sweeping bow which accompanied it.

"I am glad to hear it, Mr. Essing-

ton," said he, "and very soon, I hope, you will be leaving 'The Retreat.'"

"I should prefer," said Mr. Essington, "to think that you regretted that impending calamity. I shall miss you all, doctor, extremely; especially the fellow who thinks he's the equator and tries to encircle all the ladies. In fact, I am taking that tip away with me. However, in the meantime I have only arranged a little trip up to town for the day with our friend Walters, just to get my sane legs and buy a button-hole or so. I shall be back at night, I assure you; probably with half a dozen new stories."

He turned to the young doctor and said in the most engaging and persuasive way:

"Tell the doctor our program, Walters. Explain that we shall toss whether I shall look after you or you after me, and that in either case the looking will be damned well done."

Doctor Walters laughed and said:

"The fact is, sir, when I went into my room just now I found Mr. Essington waiting for me, and nothing would satisfy him but coming to see you to ask whether he could run up to town with me to-morrow. I mentioned to him that I was going up for the day, and he seems extraordinarily set upon it."

"Extraordinarily?" exclaimed Mr. Essington. "My dear fellow, you have never been deprived of your liberty for ten years——"

"Ten years?" interrupted Doctor Jenkinson. "Oh, come——"

"It seems like ten years to me," said Mr. Essington with a sigh, "and probably seems more to my tradesmen and best girls. The really extraordinary thing would be to find a fellow in this retreat who doesn't long for a day's liberty."

Doctor Jenkinson began to shake his head kindly but firmly.

"Not quite yet, Mr. Essington——"

"One moment!" interrupted that gentleman hurriedly. "Don't commit yourself to any statement you would be sorry for afterward. I should be really infernally grieved to think of your doing that, doctor. If you let me out with Walters to-morrow, I give you the solemnest guarantee ever given to a medical man that I shall only consume one bottle, speak for one minute to one pretty girl—Walters watching me with his watch in his hand—and order one pair of trousers from one tailor. I can even make it one trouser, if you insist. And I guarantee to come back at night. Whereas supposing that by some unlucky chance Jakes there"—he indicated the attendant in the background—"were to give me a leg up over the wall and I happened to fall safely on the other side. Then I'd be gone without any guarantees whatever. A dozen bottles, a dozen girls—my dear sir, there's no knowing what excesses you might not find yourself responsible for! Come now, doctor, be a sportsman!"

No one but a hardened specialist could have resisted this eloquent appeal and the amiable and pleading manner in which it was delivered. But Doctor Jenkinson merely shook his head once more.

"Not quite yet, Mr. Essington," he repeated quietly, but with an air of finality which caused the disappointed gentleman to heave his shoulders in a dramatic sigh.

"I should have thought," he said, "that one good turn deserved another. I have been supplying you with a twenty-fourth part of your income for several months, and yet you refuse me a single day at my own expense! I fear that a modern Danté would depict you in a very uncomfortable position. However, I bow to your decision."

And suiting his action to his words, he bowed again profoundly and started back alone the way he had come. When



For a moment Philip stared at the man in silence, and then he uttered one word, but uttered that very sincerely.

he had gone a short distance, Jakes turned after him and the procession of two presently disappeared among the trees of the park.

"It is too soon to run any risks with Essington," said Doctor Jenkinson. "I couldn't possibly let him go up to town with you to-morrow."

"I didn't seriously think of it myself, sir," Doctor Walters hastened to explain; "but he really wouldn't leave

me alone until I had asked you. The poor chap is simply pining for a change of air, and he seems so much better that I thought there was no harm in letting him put the question."

"All the same, I don't think it is wise to give him any encouragement at all at present," said Doctor Jenkinson as they walked on together through the grounds. "This is one of those very difficult cases where a man is just in the borderland between the normal and the abnormal. In one sense he has all his wits about him."

"Very much so!" agreed Walters. "If one met him anywhere else, one would put him down as an exceptionally alert gentleman."

"Especially," added his chief with a dry smile, "after he had persuaded you to cash a worthless check for him, and you discovered that he had run

away with your daughter. He is so entirely irresponsible! That's why I shouldn't trust him five yards outside these walls. After all, Walters, a sense of responsibility is the true test, and judged by it Mr. Essington must remain here until he has recovered that sense."

"Well, sir," said Walters, "I can't help feeling sorry for him, knowing how I should pine for a day in the

open if I were in his shoes; but I quite realize that it can't be allowed."

They walked on in silence for a few minutes, and then Doctor Jenkinson said:

"You know that once he had a short attack of this kind before, and ran away then. I hope he isn't thinking of it now. He seemed to hint that something of that sort might be in his mind."

"Oh, I hardly think so, sir. He is as frank as anything with me; in fact he can't help being frank at present, and if he had anything of that sort in his head he'd have been certain to let it out."

"It is very difficult to say exactly what is in Mr. Mandell-Essington's head," said Doctor Jenkinson, "and as to whether he is quite as transparently frank as you think—h'm!"

A little later Doctor Walters was back in his room, and with the anticipation of the morrow in London in his mind, he turned to his time-table to look up the trains. It usually stood among a small row of reference books on his desk, but it certainly was not there now. He hunted through the papers on his table, in the bookcase, everywhere, but there was not a sign of it.

"Who can possibly have taken it?" he said to himself. "Nobody has any business to have been in this room." And then suddenly he remembered that one person had been there. Mr. Essington, in fact, had been waiting for him before they set out to see Doctor Jenkinson. His chief's last words returned sharply to his mind.

"Can the man actually have any idea of that kind?" he asked himself. "We must keep our weather eye open, anyhow?"

CHAPTER IV.

"Wadbury and Bridminton seem to be the only two possible stations," said Mr. Essington to himself.

He folded up the map and replaced

the time-table in his pocket, first throwing a wary glance at a figure pacing the turf about a hundred yards away.

"Trains are all very well," the soliloquy concluded, "but that's a particularly damned-looking kind of wall, and I believe Jakes is quite a bit of a sprinter."

He was sitting on a rustic bench in a corner of the park, a grove of high trees all about him, glimpses of his perambulating guardian on the one side, and of a nine-foot brick wall on the other. The afternoon was warm and fine, and he had just folded his arms and closed his eyes with an air of indolent resignation when he was roused by the sharp sound of a footfall on crackling twigs. Turning, he beheld an entire stranger dodging, it appeared, somewhat cautiously through the trees. Mr. Essington studied him with close attention and perceived him to be a decidedly young gentleman and of a very agreeable appearance.

"Mr. Mandell-Essington, I believe?" said the young man.

He spoke very politely, but his courtesy was quite outdone by the gentleman on the bench, who rose, lifted his hat, bowed gracefully, and said:

"The same, sir. And, believe me, I am charmed to see you. When I know you better I propose to ask you for an introduction to your tailor, and I assure you I could pay no man a higher compliment."

With these words he sat down, folded his arms again, and smiled at the stranger in the friendliest fashion. In spite, however, of this cordial welcome, the young man seemed a trifle embarrassed.

"My name is Ridley," he began.

"An excellent name," said the gentleman on the bench in an encouraging voice. "If I were a girl, I should as soon become Mrs. Ridley as almost anything."

Even this did not seem to set Mr.

Ridley entirely at his ease. He hesitated for a moment and then resumed:

"You are one of Miss Beatrix Staynes' guardians, I believe?"

"Miss Beatrix Staynes?" replied the gentleman on the bench. "Ah, yes! I believe her late father did indeed pay that very remarkable compliment to the solidity of my character and austerity of morals. I have never before been intrusted with what I believe they term 'a bit of fluff,' but I look forward greatly to chaperoning Miss Beatrix. Pretty girl, I hope?"

"Extremely," said the young man, still looking a trifle embarrassed, "but what I have really come to see you about, Mr. Essington, is her disappearance."

"Disappearance?" said Mr. Essington, raising his brows. "Begun already, has she? Ah, well, she will turn up again and probably at the most awkward moment possible. At least, my own happy reminiscences have generally shown a damnable tendency to boomerang just when one hoped they had forgotten."

"I am afraid I haven't made myself perfectly clear," said Philip. "The facts are—I met Miss Staynes in Switzerland, and—well, we became engaged."

"I congratulate you!" smiled Mr. Essington. "Pardon the interruption, but I believe it is quite the correct thing to say. And thereupon she disappeared? Do you attribute it to sheer carelessness or a tendency to betrothal bigamy?"

"Oh, but she didn't disappear immediately!" cried the young man, a little doubtful in what spirit he should treat these comments, and thereupon he narrated his adventures of the past few days in a brief, straightforward fashion, yet with sufficient particularity to place Miss Staynes' guardian in possession of the essential facts.

Mr. Essington listened with great

attention, and appeared to be vastly interested, yet his first comment struck Philip as missing the seriousness of the situation.

"It reminds me," said he, "of a curious adventure of an old friend of my own. A charming girl absolutely vanished, taking his dress boots and his best set of shirt studs——"

"Pardon me, Mr. Essington," the young lover interrupted, politely yet firmly, "but time is rather pressing and I want your assistance, if—if you can give me any."

"My dear fellow, you shall certainly have it," said Mr. Essington cordially. "The first thing for us to do is to get on the track of my old friend Horsham—he's not the same old friend who lost the dress boots, by the way. Old Horsham has no doubt married the girl already. Still, if we can recover the lady and square the registrar——"

Again the unfortunate lover began to exhibit symptoms of some impatience.

"You agree with me, then, that Sir Joshua is at the bottom of it?" said he.

"It is only a theory," said Mr. Essington easily. "But we clearly must chase somebody, and old Horsham can't run very fast at his age, so we are more likely to catch him than anybody else. If he has the girl—well, we've got her, too. If he hasn't, it can't be helped."

This suggestion did not seem to arouse any great enthusiasm. In fact, Philip looked, for an instant, somewhat critically at the lady's guardian and then frowned into space. In a moment he asked:

"Have you any idea who the man in the fur coat can be?"

"His name," said Mr. Essington, "is Legion. The number of fellows with fur coats nowadays is quite extraordinary."

At this juncture, his visitor's per-

plexity—nay, indeed his distress—evidently arrested his attention. With a very charming and kindly smile, he addressed him in a slightly more serious vein:

"My dear Ridley, I am really devilish sorry I can't tell you more precisely under which thimble the pea has strayed. And when I talked of joining in the pursuit of the amorous Joshua, I spoke, I'm afraid, a little metaphorically. As Doctor Jenkinson has no doubt informed you, I am at present so superior to my fellows both mentally and morally that they have secluded me in this Eden until I become more commonplace again. If you can persuade the good doctor to let me accompany you into the forbidden outer world"—here Mr. Essington sighed in a decidedly moving manner—"we'd have a devil of a time together! I mean, of course, after we had caught the lady," he added, for he seemed to have become aware that the excellent impression produced by the first part of this speech was a little marred by its conclusion. "In fact, when I mentioned a devil of a time I was thinking of the wedding. Do you care to discuss it with Jenkinson?"



The next moment, a couple of hands, a head, and then a whole gentleman rose above the ivy, and for an instant the gentleman's eyes seemed to be searching the lane and then to fall upon Mr. Toothill.

"Unfortunately," confessed Philip, "I don't know him. The fact is I came down here with a friend, and we decided we would make surer of seeing you if we managed it without consulting Doctor Jenkinson."

Mr. Essington's eyes had a sudden gleam in them, and he sat up sharply on his bench.

"This is much more promising!" he exclaimed. "I must apologize for assuming you to be as orthodox as you look. How did you manage to get in?"

"I simply told them at the lodge I wanted to see the doctor, and then when I got inside I chose a likely looking fellow and asked where you were."

"So easy to get in," sighed Mr. Essington, "but so dashed difficult to get out! However," he resumed in a more cheerful tone, and with a flattering suggestion of confidence in his new friend's abilities, "you have no doubt thought of some sound but simple method, something on the lines of your own excellent 'little bit of fluff,' for instance?"

Philip opened his steady gray eyes very wide for an instant, and then with an expression at once apologetic and firm he said:

"I am very sorry, Mr. Essington, that I can't possibly do—er—that. In fact, I was only given your address on the understanding that I should do nothing—er—"

He hesitated, seeking for the tactful word, and Mr. Essington, who had been studying him with a connoisseur's eye, finished his sentence for him.

"I know!" said he with virtuous emphasis. "Nothing *wrong*. My dear fellow, I am really infinitely relieved to know that taking me away with you was not part of your program. I have already consulted Doctor Jenkinson on the subject, and he has quite convinced me that I am better—and happier—where I am. Please dismiss the idea entirely from your mind, Ridley."

"Oh, but it really wasn't in it," Ridley assured him with much sincerity.

"I am glad of that! And now let us consider the best alternative."

"Alternative to what?" inquired Philip.

"I meant to say the best means of recovering my dear ward." Mr. Essington gazed thoughtfully into space

and there could be no doubt he was giving this subject very earnest attention. "You say you brought a friend with you," he resumed in a moment. "Did you leave him at the lodge?"

"No," said Philip; "as a matter of fact, we came from the station by a lane just over that wall, and I left him to wait for me there. I ought perhaps to explain," he added with a smile, "that he, too, is a friend of Beatrix, and so keen to do something to help that I couldn't very well refuse to let him come down here with me. But I assure you, he is absolutely trustworthy and discreet—that's to say he is certainly trustworthy and I shall see that he isn't indiscreet."

During this explanation a sudden gleam once more lit Mr. Essington's eye for the fraction of a second and then was gone, leaving behind an impression of even greater sympathy and attention than before.

"A fellow that can be trusted to obey your instructions implicitly?" said he.

"Oh, yes, I assure you."

"Excellent!" said Mr. Essington, and he seemed to say it with great sincerity, too. "I can assure you, my dear Ridley, that I thoroughly approve of your conduct of this affair. And I should like to add that as Beatrix's guardian, I also thoroughly approve of her choice. This time I congratulate *her*!"

And he held out his hand, which the young man took with a flush of pleasure.

"I'm awfully glad you are on our side, Mr. Essington!" he said gratefully.

"Entirely on your side," Mr. Essington assured him. "I am only sorry I can do so little at the moment. By Jove, though, I know what I can do! I can get you some very useful addresses, if you don't mind waiting here for a few minutes while I go up to the house for my pocketbook. I ask you to wait here," he explained with a con-



fidential smile, "because, you see, you came in without Jenkinson's knowledge. I'm not blaming you, my dear fellow, not a bit! Only it is just as well you should keep out of the way. You quite understand?"

"Perfectly," said Philip warmly. "It is extremely kind of you to help me."

By this time his fiancée's guardian had exhibited such a sensible, kind, and even flattering interest that his confidence in Mr. Essington was entirely restored, and even that gentleman's next request served rather to awake compassion than disquiet.

"There is just one trifling favor I am afraid I must ask of you," continued the benevolent guardian. "You see that fellow pacing backward and forward over there and occasionally looking at us as though he were wondering who the devil you were? That's a tiresome lunatic who has got a most extraordinary delusion about my overcoat. If I pass him wearing this yellow coat, there will certainly be a disagreeable scene. Do you mind changing overcoats while I am away?"

Not having previously visited such an institution, Philip, though a trifle surprised at the lack of supervision implied by this incident, felt that he could hardly refuse Beatrix's guardian this small favor. Mr. Essington, now arrayed in a dark-blue melton coat, added one last injunction:

"Remain sitting on this bench with your back turned toward the man. He won't come near you so long as you sit quite still. And in any case he isn't in the least dangerous. Have no fear of that. He's only one of the noisy, rude kind of fellows. Au revoir! I won't be five minutes."

The duplicate Mr. Essington had been sitting patiently in the long yellow coat for what seemed very much more like ten than five minutes, meditating on the difference between the life of these institutions in fiction and in ac-

tual fact, and glancing occasionally over his shoulder at the perambulating lunatic with the overcoat delusion, when he was a little perturbed to see this individual stop short suddenly and stare very hard in his direction. A moment later the man was approaching him with an ever-quickenning stride, and the nearer he approached the more sincerely did Philip hope that his friend's description of him as nondangerous was correct, for he was a strapping customer. And then in a voice which suggested no unreasonable prejudice against yellow overcoats, but certainly indicated considerable concern, the man inquired:

"Where is Mr. Essington, sir?"

"Mr. Essington?" replied Philip stoutly. "Why do you want to know?"

"I am his attendant," said the man.

For a moment Philip stared at the man in silence, and then he uttered one word, but uttered that very sincerely:

"Damn!"

"Where is he?" the man repeated.

"Come on!" said Philip. "I don't know where the devil he is, but we've got to catch him!"

CHAPTER V.

In a shady lane bounded by the brick wall, Mr. Charles Toothill had paced backward and forward for well-nigh an hour, calmly at first, but with ever-increasing impatience as the time went by.

"Dash it!" he said to himself. "Philip is *doin'* something. Oh, the devil! If I could only get something to *do*!" Then, with as much sentiment as his countenance could achieve, he murmured: "For *her* sake!"

As his impatience waxed, his stride also quickened, but all at once it ceased as he pulled himself up sharply and listened. A curious sound, suggestive both of scraping and struggling, was coming from the other side of the wall, and the practical eye of the man of



"What!" thundered the visitor.
 "This is a put up job!
 Who let him out?"

action noted that at the point where it came from, a considerable growth of ivy appeared above the top. The next moment a couple of hands, a head, and then a whole gentleman rose above the ivy, and for an instant the gentleman's eyes seemed to be searching the lane and then to fall upon Mr. Toothill. And thereupon, without a second's further delay, the gentleman let himself down until only his hands gripped the coping stone, and dropped into the lane.

For one bewildered moment Charles wondered what strange metamorphosis had overtaken his friend, for the blue overcoat was surely Philip's. Then he

perceived that the coat must merely be a singular coincidence, and that the gentleman himself was a stranger, tall and of a distinguished appearance. This stranger strode quickly toward him, beginning to smile in a very charming manner as he approached, and when he spoke his greeting was courtesy itself.

"Mr. Ridley's friend, I presume?" said he. "For the moment your name, sir, escapes me——"

"Toothill," said Charles in his most agreeable voice.

"Ah, of course, Toothill! A name I ought never to have forgotten! My own is Essington."

"Oh, by Jove, really!" exclaimed Charles. "Then you've got out—er—I mean come out after all? Just what I advised! But I thought Philip was dead set against it."

"A little at first," Mr. Essington admitted, "but on talking it over he very soon came to see the matter as you had advised."

"And where is Philip himself?" asked Charles anxiously.

"Covering my tracks like the good fellow he is," said Mr. Essington in a tone of such warm appreciation that Charles was more charmed with him than ever. "In the meantime he has told me I could place myself safely in your hands, Toothill!"

"My dear old bird!" cried the gratified Toothill. "I say, I beg your pardon; afraid my keenness rather carried me away. My dear Mr. Essington, I mean; I assure you I've simply been longin' to lend a hand! I am—er—a friend of *hers*, you know."

The ardent voice in which he made this confession seemed to please the lady's guardian exceedingly.

"Then I know we can count on you," said he, "and the first thing is to get a little farther away from that wall. This way, I think."

They plunged into the wood which bordered the other side of the lane, and it was apparent that Mr. Essington had been studying his map attentively, for he led the way at top speed and without hesitation until in a few minutes they caught a glimpse of a broad highway beyond the trees.

"The road from Wadbury to Bridminton!" said he, and paused at last.

"What are you goin' to do?" asked Charles.

His distinguished-looking friend took him by the arm in a very flattering and friendly way and his manner became more affectionately kind than ever.

"In the first place, Toothill—and for *her* sake entirely, old chap—Ridley

wished me to ask you for a trifling favor."

"Rather! What is it?" said Charles stoutly. "You know I promised to do anything he wanted me to do."

"Splendid fellow!" exclaimed Mr. Essington in a voice which seemed to indicate great pleasure in this discovery. "That makes a somewhat delicate favor infinitely easier to ask. He wishes you, Toothill, to lend me a five-pound note—or two!" he added hastily as he saw Charles' eye actually brighten, "or even three if you can spare them. In fact as much as you can conveniently let me have. I stupidly forgot to cash a check before I left."

"I'll lend you everything I've got," said Charles. "Only too delighted, in fact, to have the chance."

The celerity with which Mr. Essington, once he had got to business, transferred the contents of Mr. Toothill's purse into his own pocket impressed Charles very favorably. A man of action as well as of breeding apparently.

Having pocketed two five-pound notes, four sovereigns, and some mixed change, Miss Staynes' guardian positively insisted on his new friend keeping the rest.

"We counted on your doing another small favor," he explained, "and you may need a little ready money."

"I'm on for anything," said Charles warmly, "keen as mustard! What's the job?"

"Ridley wishes you," said Mr. Essington impressively, "to lay a false scent!"

"A false scent?" said Charles a little vaguely. "If you tell me how to lay it, rather! But what do you mean by a false scent?"

"The idea," replied Mr. Essington still more impressively, "is this: in the first place we change overcoats. Ridley and I did it before," he added in an encouraging voice as he observed the look of affectionate regret which

Mr. Toothill involuntarily cast down at his own fashionably cut article, of a pale pea-green color, with a loose back. "And, of course, we shall return yours to you the very moment we meet again."

"That will be very soon, I s'pose," said Charles with creditable optimism.

"Practically at once."

"You and Philip are sticking together, of course?"

"Like an envelope and its stamp."

"Right you are!" said Charles bravely, and in a moment he was in the blue coat and the guardian in the pea green.

"Now," said Mr. Essington, "all you've got to do, my dear Toothill—and it's really very simple indeed—is to get on to that road, turn to your right, and make for Bridminton as fast as you can trot. You'll have to run most of the way, I'm afraid, to catch the five-fifty-two train at Bridminton station, but you look in splendid condition. You can do it quite easily—for *her* sake."

"How far is it?" inquired Charles.

"Only about five miles."

"That's a deuce of a run," said Charles doubtfully. "However! And where do I take the train to?"

"Anywhere you like; Ridley leaves it to your discretion, only he advises it to be as far away as possible. The great thing is to keep running and not to speak to a soul. If anybody tries to speak to you or stop you, growl out something they can't understand and frighten them away. Knock 'em down if necessary."

"But—but—I don't quite see—" began Charles, and then he opened his eyes very wide indeed. "Oh, that's what you call a false scent! Then people will think—" He paused with his mouth also open.

"You don't mind, do you? My dear fellow, if you have any objections, Ridley and I are the last people to press

a nervous, or, I should rather say, a sensitive man."

"Oh, I promised to do whatever Philip wanted, and I'll do it!" said Charles bravely. "Only—er—supposing by any chance I'm caught, will they take me to the—er—"

"If they do, there are some devilish pretty nurses," said Mr. Essington in his most encouraging manner. "You'll have the time of your life! I wouldn't have dreamed of leaving the place if I hadn't had to look for that ward of mine; and, by Jove, we must begin looking at once! Good-by, Toothill! Ever so many thanks."

"One moment!" cried Charles.

"Supposing I don't get caught—and, by jingo, I'll see that they don't catch me easily!—well, in that case, Philip may want to write to me—"

"I'll tell him. You'll get a letter very possibly to-morrow; anyhow in a day or two. Off you get now!"

"Yes, but where's he to write? Where am I to go?"

"Say Liverpool, somewhere in the docks," suggested Mr. Essington.

"Oh, dash it, I didn't mean to go as far as that!" protested Charles. "Look here, tell him I'm going to lie low with my aunt, Lady Beaton."

"Right-o, I'll tell him! But, my dear fellow, you've five miles to run—"

"Good-by!" cried Charles over his shoulder as he made for the road. "And when you do find her—"

"I know—your love!"

The distinguished-looking gentleman waved a kindly farewell and then took out his watch and his time-table. A few minutes later he was hastening in the opposite direction.

CHAPTER VI.

Upon this same afternoon, very shortly after Ridley had passed through the gates of Doctor Jenkinson's grounds, another gentleman appeared

at the lodge and also made inquiry for the doctor. This second gentleman, however, actually proceeded up to the house and paid a genuine call. The doctor had not previously made his acquaintance, nor did the name of "Mr. Mason" when it was sent in to him suggest any association of ideas, but the moment the visitor entered his room, Mr. Mason was at some pains to make it quite clear that he was a person of fashion and position in life.

"I believe," said he, "that you are acquainted with my uncle, Sir Joshua Horsham."

"Oh, yes, certainly," said the doctor affably. "I have the pleasure of Sir Joshua's acquaintance, and the name of Horsham & Stukley is of course very well known."

"I also am a partner in that firm," Mr. Mason mentioned in an incidental sort of way, and Doctor Jenkinson looked with increased respect at his caller. He was a man, he judged, about five and thirty, tall, clean-shaved, with pronounced, but well-cut and handsome features. His jet-black hair was distinctly wavy, but barbered to a miracle of glossiness, and his manner was an impressive blend of confidence in himself and condescension toward others less favorably situated in society. The doctor felt that his distinguished-looking visitor had placed him immediately in this last category, but being a modest and unassuming little man, he accepted the classification as quite natural and very proper.

"I have called upon you," the visitor proceeded, "with reference to my old friend Mr. Mandell-Essington."

"Ah, quite so!" said the doctor. "I was of course aware that Sir Joshua was much interested in Mr. Mandell-Essington. They are related, in fact, are they not?"

"Connected. Francis and I are very old friends indeed. We were at school and at the varsity together, and as I

happen to be a year or two older, he always regarded me as a kind of elder brother. Since then we have shot together, hunted together, and so on; in short, we have kept up our intimacy down to this day, and I think Francis would probably tell you that I am his oldest friend."

"Indeed?" said the doctor with interest. "Well, Mr. Mason, in that case you will be glad to hear that Mr. Essington is making a satisfactory recovery from this unfortunate but luckily very brief attack. He is quite on the mend now, I assure you."

"I am very glad indeed to hear it," said Mr. Mason, yet with a note of gravity that a little surprised the doctor.

"Oh, but I assure you I am not at all exaggerating his progress."

Still Mr. Mason failed to show those signs of pleasure which Doctor Jenkinson expected.

"I hope you are right, doctor; I hope so indeed," said he, still in the same grave tone. "Naturally no one can be more delighted than I to think of poor Francis being himself again. At the same time I know his constitution and temperament probably better than any one else, and I feel perfectly certain, absolutely assured, Doctor Jenkinson"—here his voice became very serious and impressive indeed—"that it would be the gravest mistake to let him leave your charge for some time to come. I want to impress that on you very strongly, Doctor Jenkinson."

"I have only to-day put my foot down on a suggestion that he should be allowed a day in London on probation," said the doctor.

Mr. Mason seemed curiously disturbed by this news.

"At whose instigation was this suggestion made?" he demanded.

"Oh, it was entirely his own idea."

Mr. Mason threw him a curious look.

"I wonder!" said he, and then added

emphatically: "He must not be allowed anywhere."

"I shall use my judgment of course," said the doctor mildly.

"I am adding the advantage of mine also," answered his visitor in a tone that made it difficult to find a reply.

Mr. Mason gave the doctor a moment to let this sink in, and then resumed, speaking now in an even graver voice:

"It has come to my knowledge, Doctor Jenkinson, that certain unscrupulous persons may very probably attempt to get at Francis and trouble him on a matter of family business, and I need hardly point out how that would retard his recovery. This must be prevented at all costs."

"I can assure you, Mr. Mason," said the doctor, "that I certainly should not allow anything of that sort if I could help it, and now that I am warned, I certainly shall prevent it. At the same time," he added with a smile, "Mr. Mandell-Essington is scarcely likely to be much affected even if approached on business matters. I imagine that he has at no time taken life with what I may perhaps be allowed to call undue seriousness, and at present his buoyancy is even more marked than usual."

Mr. Mason shook his head.

"It mustn't be risked, doctor! And, besides, I fear there may be even the danger of an attempt to get him out. I have no specific information, but I want to guard against everything, even against off chances." He seemed to see in the doctor's eye an indication of some surprise at this extreme solicitude, for he added with emphasis: "I speak as his oldest friend, remember; a friend who above all others is attached to poor Francis and concerned for his welfare."

"I shall take every precaution," replied Doctor Jenkinson. "You can rest assured——"

But the assurance got no further, for at that moment the door was flung open hurriedly and Doctor Walters entered. His usually brisk and cheerful manner was notably altered.

"Mandell-Essington has escaped!" he cried.

"What!" thundered the visitor, and then with a darkened face and a manner that had lost all its suavity and condescension, he cried: "This is a put-up job! Who let him out?"

Doctor Jenkinson drew himself up and his manner also changed.

"This is my assistant, Doctor Walters," he said stiffly. "He will tell you what there is to be known. I myself am as ignorant of the facts as you are. How did it happen, Walters?"

"We don't exactly know yet. The only person who actually saw him start is a fellow who appears to have got into the grounds somehow or other and to have been talking to him."

"Do you mean he helped him to escape?" cried Mr. Mason.

"I hardly think so, because it was he who came and reported the escape. I really don't know what to make of the business."

"Where is this fellow?" demanded Doctor Jenkinson.

"Out in the hall, sir."

"Let us see him at once," said Mr. Mason.

In the hall they found a gentlemanly and good-looking young man, with a light yellow overcoat carried across his arm.

"Are you the gentleman who saw Mr. Essington escape?" asked the doctor.

"I was with him just before he went away," said the young man. "By the way, here is his overcoat. I may mention that he has escaped in mine, and if you recover it I should be very glad to have it back again."

His coolness seemed to disconcert both Mr. Essington's custodian and his friend.

"Do you mean—er—that you——" began the doctor.

"You lent him your coat to escape in?" interrupted Mr. Mason.

"Are you Doctor Jenkinson?" inquired the young man.

"I am not——" began Mr. Mason warmly.

The young man had already turned his shoulder to him.

"You will please see about returning my coat," he said to the doctor.

"May I ask your name?" inquired the doctor.

"Ridley," said the young man.

"Oh," said the doctor, eying him dubiously, and a moment later he turned to Mr. Mason, but in the course of that moment his first visitor had turned away abruptly and was already on his way back to the doctor's room.

After his first look of surprise, Doctor Jenkinson seemed not displeased to be quit of his peremptory visitor. He put several questions to Ridley and extracted a brief account of Mr. Essington's method of departure. As to the precise reason why Mr. Ridley should have entered the grounds and interviewed Mr. Essington without permission, the young man assured him that it was merely a matter of private business, that he had consulted a lawyer before taking the step, and that so far from abetting the fugitive in his escape, nothing more disastrously inconvenient to himself could possibly have happened. Indeed, Ridley was evidently so sincerely troubled by Mr. Essington's flight and so



Walters glanced at the handsome fur coat lying across a chair, and answered in the same vein: "Must be. It's too magnificent for any of us ordinary people."

anxious to assist in his recapture that the doctor contented himself with looking exceedingly grave, taking down his address, and finally letting him go with a warning against entering such institutions again and accepting the statements of their inhabitants.

"If I didn't happen to know so much about Mr. Essington," said he, "I should feel some not unnatural suspicion of your story, Mr. Ridley, but I

already suspected him of wanting to escape, and the manner in which he deceived you is—well, in fact, it is too thoroughly characteristic of the gentleman to be invented by anybody else.”

“You will surely recapture him very soon, won’t you?” said Philip eagerly.

“Oh, that is probably merely a matter of hours,” replied the doctor confidently. “There are only two stations in this whole neighborhood, and no trains from either of them that he could possibly catch before evening. By that time I shall have men watching them both and he will be nailed for a certainty if he tries to get away by train. If he simply wanders through the country—well, we shall get him in the course of to-morrow at latest.”

Doctor Jenkinson had already turned back toward his room, when a very important question occurred to him.

“Oh, by the way,” said he, “what was the color and description of your coat which Essington is now wearing?”

“Blue melton cloth with a velvet collar.”

“Ah!” exclaimed the doctor. “Lucky I remembered to ask you that. We now know how he is dressed, Walters.”

The young doctor led Ridley to the front door. He threw it open, and they perceived a cab waiting outside. Philip paused on the threshold.

“Do you happen to know who that was with Doctor Jenkinson?” he asked.

Walters shrugged his shoulders.

“Some one who has apparently just bought the whole place,” he replied.

“I suppose he came in that cab?”

“Presumably.”

“Is this his coat?”

Walters glanced at the handsome fur coat lying across a chair.

“Must be. It’s too magnificent for any of us ordinary people.”

“Could you possibly find out his name?” asked Philip.

“Do you know anything about him?” said Walters.

“Nothing for certain, but I have an impression I may have seen him before, and I should be very much obliged if you could tell me who he is.”

“If he gave his name when he arrived, I might find out.”

He returned in a minute and said:

“Mason is the potentate’s name,” and then perceiving that this answer seemed to disappoint the visitor, he asked: “That the man you mean?”

“I was merely thinking,” said Philip, “that it was such a beastly common name—not very easy to trace, I’m afraid. However, many thanks for finding out for me.”

As he walked down the drive his thoughts took another turn.

“Poor old Charles must be getting a bit impatient!” he said to himself. “I wonder how he is putting in the time?”

Toward eight o’clock in the evening Doctor Walters came in hurriedly to see his chief.

“The beggar has actually got away by train, sir!” he announced. “I’ve just heard that a man in a blue melton coat was seen at various places on the road running like a stag toward Bridminton. He dashed into the station just as the five-fifty-two train was moving out, knocked down a porter who tried to stop him, and leaped into the end carriage without a ticket. And where he has got to by now, Heaven only knows!”

The two doctors looked at one another in silence for a few moments, and then Walters ventured to remark:

“I had no idea Essington was fond enough of exercise for such a sprint!”

“No more had I!” agreed his chief. “He is really a very unusual case.”

CHAPTER VII.

For some time before the down express was due, a couple of stalwart figures had been sitting, the one in the waiting room and the other in the ticket office of Wadbury station. As neither

of them made any great secret of his business there, and as, in fact, the man in the ticket office had to explain his errand to the station master in order to obtain admission, their purpose very soon became known to the whole staff, and a pleasing thrill of excitement began to pervade the station.

"One of Doctor Jenkinson's lunatics run away!" ran the rumor. "He's expected to try to escape by this train, but them two big fellows are going to catch him! No fears of his getting away from them!"

Dusk had begun to draw in soon after the big fellows' arrival, and by the time the express was signaled, it had grown quite dark. This circumstance added considerably to the excitement, for, in the shadows, who among one's fellow passengers might not be the dangerous runaway? And even the lamps gave little enough illumination to reassure the nervous. On the other hand, a tale, very exciting in itself but disappointing so far as Wadbury's particular sensation was concerned, had been brought to the station by a late arrival. It was said that the lunatic had actually been seen escaping in quite the opposite direction. Indeed, it was even said that instead of endeavoring to evade observation, he had careered down the highroad toward Bridminton; and, if this were really true, he clearly could not have fled toward Wadbury.

The station master brought this story at once to the two stalwart figures, and the three could be seen standing together discussing its probability. One or two of the more inquisitive bystanders drew near the group and reported that on the whole the chances of a dramatic scene at Wadbury were considered to have diminished greatly. Still, the big fellows were going to wait until the train had come and gone, so that even yet there remained some hope of a stirring struggle. And then came a faint, steadily swelling rumble

through the night, and a bell clanged in the station.

That night there happened to be more passengers than usual at Wadbury station, and for two or three minutes after the express rolled in, Doctor Jenkinson's two big men were kept busy. The departing passengers watched them over their shoulders as they climbed in, and then pushed their heads out through the windows and watched them still. Up and down the train they roved, peering here and there, but there was never a cry or a scuffle or a chase. And then the doors began to close and the platform beside the carriages to clear of people, and it became evident that unless the runaway meant to make a rush for the train at the last moment, there would be no exciting drama after all.

The guard was ready with his flag and lantern, most of the heads had been withdrawn again, and the two big men were standing with the station master near the front of the train looking down its length on the off chance of a last-moment attempt, but evidently resigned to a blank evening.

"It'll have been him making for Bridminton, right enough," said one of the pair.

"No doubt of that," agreed the station master.

At that moment a tall gentleman stepped very quietly out of the gloom at the deserted end of the platform and walked up to the engine driver. The three watchers stood a few paces off with their backs to him and hardly a head was now to be seen looking out of the windows. This gentleman was dressed in a loose, pea-green overcoat, carried himself with a very confident and distinguished air, and blew the smoke of a cigar lightly from his lips as he opened the conversation.

"Driver," he inquired in a voice that made the driver instinctively touch his

hat, "have none of the other directors turned up?"

"No, sir," said the engine driver, looking a little surprised.

"What; no sign of the duke?"

"No, sir," replied the driver, his tone becoming distinctly deferential.

"Ah, well," said the distinguished-looking gentleman, "in that case I must start without them."

And with that he stepped on board the engine and commanded:

"You can start the train now, driver."

Even as he spoke, the guard waved his lantern, and to the engine driver it seemed obvious, he afterward declared, that the train must merely have been waiting for this aristocratic-looking director to get on board. As they moved off, the distinguished gentleman remarked in an approving tone:

"Very smart indeed, driver. I never like to be kept waiting." He added: "You probably didn't hear that the board of directors was making a round of inspection, did you?"

The engine driver confessed his ignorance; whereupon the director expressed his satisfaction that the visit had been so successfully kept a secret.

"We meant it to be in the nature of a surprise," said he; "the idea was to see how the system was working when it didn't know it was being watched. We are doing it devilish thoroughly, I can assure you."

It struck the engine driver that the board seemed to be working on somewhat original lines, but at the moment he was too busy engine driving to make any adequate comment.

A few minutes later the director asked suddenly:

"What are those lights?"

The driver stared for a moment.

"That ought to be a place they call 'The Retreat.'"

"What, my friend Doctor Jenkinson's place?" exclaimed the director.

"Must be," said the driver.

"How pleasant it is to see them from here!" observed the director.

He seemed very thoughtful for some little time after this; then he said:

"What is the next stop, driver?"

"Yeddlesby, sir."

"How soon do we get there?"

"Twenty-six minutes' run from Wadbury, sir."

"So soon as that?" murmured the director. "Confound it!" And then he asked: "How long is the next run?"

"Hour and ten minutes, sir."

"Ah!" said the director, and he seemed more satisfied.

On the whole, the engine driver considered that he was coming safely and possibly even creditably through the ordeal of the director's inspection. When he did condescend to address him, that magnate was as affable and polite as any gentleman he had ever met, and as for a critical inspection either of the engine or anything else, only one single symptom of an inspecting spirit did the director display during the whole course of his ride. This was at Yeddlesby Junction, where he announced his intention of examining the wheels and leaped down on to the line the instant they had pulled up in the station. On this occasion his inspection was evidently as thorough as he could make it in the time, for it was only at the very last moment that he climbed back. And further evidence of his thoroughness, when he did exert himself, was to be seen in the particular injunction he laid upon the driver and fireman not to report his presence to any one while they were in the station.

"We wish our visit of inspection to be a complete surprise," he repeated very gravely and emphatically indeed.

After that came a long, unbroken run through a dim, rolling country of few lights—save when they roared through some wayside station or little sleepy town—and of many black patches of woodland. They had been

going thus for over half an hour when the brakes suddenly jarred and their speed dropped abruptly.

"Hullo, what's up?" inquired the director.

"Signal's against us," said the driver briefly. "Something on the line, I suppose."

A minute or two more and the express was at a dead stop, the engine panting gently, the red light showing ahead, and all round them a dark wilderness, apparently of sparsely wooded, open heath. The director glanced out into the night and then addressed the driver courteously.

"Good night, driver," said he. "I get off here. I am having the next train stopped to pick me up. Many thanks for the ride. You have come through your inspection very satisfactorily, I may say."

And with that he stepped off the engine as calmly, the driver subsequently testified, as if he were walking out of a shop. In the radiance of the engine lights they saw him for a moment beside the line, strolling with an easy and unconcerned air toward the rear of the train, and then the night engulfed him.

"Well, I'm blowed!" said the engine driver.

CHAPTER VIII.

From end to end of the quiet lane under the high brick wall Philip Ridley paced, and then all its length back again, but there was never a sign of Charles Toothill at the rendezvous. His surprise became concern; he tried whistling and cooeing; for a whole half hour he waited, and all the while he had the lonely lane to himself.

"This is very unlike Charles," he said. "I never knew a truster fellow."

The only conceivable possibility seemed to be that Charles had misunderstood their plan and gone to meet him at the station. They had arrived

at Wadbury, but the only evening train up to London left from Bridminton, and so at last Ridley set out to walk the five miles there. Evening was falling when he arrived, and the train was not due for more than half an hour, but no Charles was on the platform, and in the thickening dusk and with dashed spirits Philip paced the deserted platform. All the while the faint hope of seeing his friend appear at the eleventh hour was growing fainter, when, about ten minutes before the train was due, he heard a cab rattle into the station yard. He hastened toward the door into the booking office, and met there, face to face, a gentleman coming through to the platform. But it was not Charles; it was a tall man in a fur coat.

That the gentleman in the fur coat recognized Ridley was evident, and that he had no desire to resume their acquaintance was equally clear. Mr. Mason turned his shoulder, brushed past, and strode down the platform.

Bridminton was a junction, and on a sidetrack another train had been standing for some time, the engine attached and the carriages lit up. Mr. Mason approached the guard of this train, spoke to him for a moment, and then looked back over his shoulder and also seemed to hesitate. And then Philip made up his mind and boldly walked up to him.

"Mr. Mason, I believe?" said he.

The tall man seemed to give the slightest possible start, as though—Philip thought—the discovery that his name was known for an instant took him a little aback. Then he said:

"I am."

Under ordinary circumstances Philip would have been the very last person to accost a stranger considerably older than himself and force his company upon him, but he was a resolute young man, and, despite the other's aloofness, stood to his guns.

"We met at Doctor Jenkinson's, I think," he went on.

"Indeed?" said Mr. Mason stonily.

"You are a friend of Mr. Essington's, I presume?"

To this Mr. Mason made no answer and Philip continued politely:

"I am sorry I had inadvertently any part in his escape."

"So am I," replied Mr. Mason in a manner which seemed intended to convey the impression he was addressing an erring servant.

Determined to extract every iota of information extractable, Philip inquired:

"Had you intended to see Mr. Essington yourself?"

Mr. Mason looked at him in silence for a moment, and when he spoke his tone seemed, if possible, even more deliberately intended to end such talk.

"Is that any business of yours?"

Philip decided to risk a desperate shot.

"I asked," he said, "because I believe I saw you lately with Mr. Essington's ward."

There was no doubt that Mr. Mason was startled this time, though whether it was because the shot went home, or was simply the start of puzzled and bewildered innocence, Philip wished devoutly he could feel certain.

"Really!" said Mr. Mason.

"I mean Miss Beatrix Staynes," added Philip openly.

Mr. Mason's did not blink or waver.

"Who is she?" he inquired.

"I have told you—Mr. Essington's ward. As a friend of his you must have been aware of that."

"I am not acquainted with all Mr. Essington's responsibilities, nor," he added, "do I see why I should discuss Mr. Essington's affairs with you."

So far Philip was fain to admit he had got remarkably little change out

of Mr. Mason, and then a sudden thought leaped into his mind:

"You have nothing to say to me then? Nothing to ask me?"

"Nothing whatever," said Mr. Mason with a touch of irony.

"Not even why I made my way into 'The Retreat' to interview your friend, Mr. Essington?"

There was no doubt the shot went home. Mr. Mason was manifestly non-plused and for a moment said nothing.

"You had probably guessed already?" suggested Philip.

"I am not interested in the matter," replied Mr. Mason, and very deliberately turned his back.

At that moment the roar of the incoming train rose through the night.

"I shall follow Mr. Mason!" said Philip to himself. "He *did* know why I came down, and therefore——"

The fur-coated gentleman walked a little distance from him and then stopped and again looked back at him. The train came in and Philip waited until he saw Mr. Mason safely into a carriage near the engine, and then he got into one farther down the train. A minute or two passed, and they were off. Glancing out of the window, Philip saw the station lamps and buildings and one or two figures glide by, and, last of all, Mr. Mason.

He leaped to his feet, and his hand was on the handle, but they were past the platform by this time and moving fast. He fell back into the seat and cursed his own unwariness. There returned to his memory now the vision of Mr. Mason speaking to the guard of the other train and then glancing over his shoulder and hesitating.

"He meant to go by that train all the time," he thought. "But that at least shows he was afraid I would follow him. He must have been the man in the cab. I'm certain of it now!"

TO BE CONTINUED.

Values *and* Vivian

By Dorothea Brande

ILLUSTRATED BY SEDDIE B. ASPELL

If this were an article its title might be "Interior Decorating for Girls." It is, however, a delightful love story, with a freshness and charm you will like.

OLD Stephen MacGregor came frowning down the Avenue, his gray head thrust forward, his bushy brows drawn together. He had been back in New York less than six hours, but every moment of the six hours had counted, unfortunately, against the prosperity of the house of MacGregor. The late summer afternoon was cool and bright, and the gray buildings thrust up into the clear light blue of the sky in this way that had taken old Stephen's breath when he had seen it for the first time forty years before, and in this way which seemed more beautiful to him every time he came back to it.

He was used, on occasions like these, to think with grim enjoyment of the contrast between his sad condition that first time he had seen Fifth Avenue and the comparative splendor of his later years. To-day, for the first time, there seemed to him to be no great contrast between the Scotch lad gangling along the smart street long ago and himself that bright September afternoon. He must have been a queer enough sight, in those old days, with his knobby bag and his thick shoes and his suit which was like no other suit in town. But that suit had given him the courage he needed to face a new world; when the tight-trousered lads of the eighties had laughed past him, he had gone by with his Airedale face uplifted with contempt. They thought his clothes were

funny, did they? Well, he could tell them a thing or two about their suits, if he chose! There was no better piece of woolen stuff on the Avenue, well made or ill. Who had a better right to know than he, newly come from a town of weavers? At the recurring thought, MacGregor shook his shaggy head. He'd have done better, no doubt, to have learned tailoring, or some such thing. A decorator! Who needed a decorator when times were bad? Clothes a man was obliged to have if he went among his fellows, but let him lock his door or move into a hotel, and who cared whether or not his four walls were bare?

Old Stephen turned off into a side street in the Thirties. His cane rapped briskly along for half a block until he stopped before the plate glass of "MacGregor." Below the sturdy name, in slanting, wide-spaced script, ran:

Decorations—Furniture—Fabrics.

The window held a dark rug worth a small fortune, and against a tapestry, brown with age, there stood a refectory table and a fine old chair. The exhibit was too dark to be effective; it turned the window into a splendid mirror for every little high-heeled clerk that passed. From across the street one saw nothing except the gold letters shining in the afternoon sun, but it was a window dressed after old Stephen's heart. It meant that his son Malcolm was following duly and creditably in

his footsteps, and he regarded the tapestry and the table and the chair with a grim approval into which some of his paternal affection seemed to have entered.

"Aye, the boy's the right sort," Stephen said to himself, comforted, and he turned into the doorway. The interior of the shop was dark, too, and he blinked there a moment. Then he saw the earnest equine face of his secretary materializing out of the shadows at the end and he nodded to her.

"Oh, Mr. MacGregor!" she said, fluttering aimlessly about him.

Stephen greeted her with an amiable grunt. He supposed that, of course, the fluttering was due to such mild emotion as his returning from Scotland might have engendered. If he had been less preoccupied with the turn his affairs had taken, he might have remembered that in all the fifteen years Miss Mathews had served him she had never fluttered before for so much as a minute. He made as if to pass her, but she got awkwardly in front of him.

"Oh, Mr. MacGregor!" she began again. Stephen stared at her. In the little pause which followed, he became aware that some one was talking in his glass-inclosed office.

"Eh?" he asked. He ducked his head in the direction of the office and lifted his great brows. In the confidential language of business he had asked if the voice belonged to a client.

Miss Mathews shook her long head, embarrassed.

"Sh! No, it's not!" she had the effrontery to say.

Old Stephen exploded.

"Woman! What's come over you? Am I to hold my tongue in my own shop?" He ripped off his gloves with exasperation. "What's the meaning of this foolishness? Is Mr. Malcolm in there, too?"

Miss Mathews nodded. She fixed

him earnestly with her eyes; her face quivered with her nervousness.

"It's a girl!" she said tensely. "It's a nice girl, Mr. MacGregor, and she wants to work here."

Stephen exploded completely at that.

"Twenty-three——" he began, when Miss Mathews interrupted him.

"Don't say that!" she said, with sharp, unusual courage.

"Not say what?" Stephen barked.

"That twenty-three women and girls came in here in one day and wanted to learn interior decorating!" she besought. "I know that. I was here, too. But that was the worst day, you know it was, Mr. MacGregor; and this girl's different. Mr. Malcolm saw it at once."

"Hmph!" said old Stephen. "I suppose that means that she's pretty, eh? Well, you don't need beauty to be a good decorator," he said with grim humor, "or where would I be?" He started to pass her.

Miss Mathews, the self-effacing, the ever-impeccable, caught his sleeve.

"Don't you frighten her!" she whispered vehemently.

"Are you daft, or totally bewitched?" old Stephen asked, standing stock-still, and under his beetling look Miss Mathews seemed to lose her courage and shrink back into meekness. She lifted her round shoulders helplessly and slipped behind a curtain. Stephen threw open the door of his office.

The cause of the upheaval was standing with her back to him when he came in, leaning with both hands behind her on a table. He had just a flash of an impression before his son spoke; she was rather tall and straight-backed, with something boyish in the set of her head, although she was dressed in clothes which old Stephen thought were atrociously feminine. She had on a blousing overdress of a type which he hated with all his meticulous Scotch heart—he could feel even now his



With her eyelids very stiff and her chin very high, she opened the glass door before Malcolm could reach it and before old Stephen could get to his feet.

mother's scorn of girls who were not tidy—and the low brown shoes she wore were strapped and buckled like sandals.

Malcolm came toward him from the window sill. He was a good three inches taller than his tall father, and he had a Latin coloring which went incongruously with his Scot's name.

"Father," he said, "this is Miss Baird."

"Do, Miss Baird," Stephen said gruffly, throwing his gloves on the table and standing his stick carefully in a corner. She turned around to meet

him and held out her hand in a boyish way which belied the "arty" clothes, and he saw her face for the first time.

It really was no wonder that his plain stenographer had been bowled completely out. The girl had eyes of the most remarkable vivid blue and a large and beautiful mouth. Her hair was the rich and lovely color of some of Stephen's most prized pieces of brown mahogany. She was simply so healthily and completely beautiful that she had not the slightest self-consciousness about her; she was even, Stephen felt, a little brash from a triumphal progress

of—at a guess—twenty-three years or so. He stared at her from under his bushy brows, and he saw that not even his rather terrifying manner or his quite manifest reserving of judgment had the slightest effect of abashing her.

"How do you do, Mr. MacGregor?" she asked. She indicated Malcolm with her head. "I was just telling your son that I wanted a job and he seemed to think you might use me."

"Did, eh?" Stephen asked. He turned and fixed Malcolm with his sharp eyes. "Taking a good deal on himself, I'm afraid." And even when he said it, he realized that in all Malcolm's by no means dull life, he had never seen his son look so extraordinarily alive. Even with all the situations in the room hanging fire, old Stephen was conscious of feeling behind his gruffness that his own son was as splendid a specimen of youth as the tall girl before him. Malcolm's mother had been gone for twenty years, and somehow at that look of excitement and interest in his son's face, MacGregor felt lonely and old. Subconsciously he set himself to fight off the issue. He shook his shoulders and pulled out his desk chair. There, fortified behind the official mahogany, he looked at the two of them, the blue-eyed girl and the tall, brown man, and shook his head.

"Well, as you saw, no doubt, I've a secretary of my own," he said, "and she suits me perfectly. I think we suit her."

"Oh," said Vivian Baird, "I didn't want a position as a secretary. I'm a decorator."

"You are, eh?" old Stephen said. He began to laugh without much mirth and went on laughing for a little while.

Miss Baird grew rosy to the roots of her hair, but she stood her ground and looked at him; finally she gravely nodded.

"Oh, dear me," Stephen said. "Well, you're fortunate, I must say, Miss

Baird. I've been studying this business some time now and I don't yet feel quite ready to call myself a decorator. I suppose you've had some training in it?"

"Yes, I have," she said. "I took a six months' course."

"Great Caesar's ghost!" old Stephen said. "Six months!"

"And I can do batik," she went on doggedly. She held out the edge of her blouse to him. "I did this," she said proudly, boasting of Stephen's abomination. "I've a good eye for color and values; every one says I have. I exhibited in Chicago this spring and got honorable mention. Really, I do know something about it, Mr. MacGregor."

"I told Miss Baird," Malcolm said, breaking in, "that we very much needed some one with the color sense and I thought we could work her in." He frowned intently at his father. Stephen felt that if Malcolm could have got near enough he would have been kicked or nudged admonishingly.

So far as Stephen could remember, the boy had always had his own way. If it had not been for that six hours' interval between the docking of the boat and the entrance of old Stephen into the affairs of MacGregor again, he would undoubtedly have had his way again. As it was, Stephen turned his sharp eyes on his son and surveyed him as expressionlessly as he had surveyed Vivian Baird. At last he turned his eyes back to the girl.

She had clasped her hands before her and her chin was rather high for a suppliant. The red had faded from her cheeks, and she looked very white and still. With the first real approval he had felt for her, aside from his admiration of her undeniable health and loveliness, Stephen realized that Miss Vivian Baird possessed a temper, and probably, although not as an inevitable corollary, courage. He was rather sorry for her, but his sorrow was mitigated

by his belief that the child was probably invincible. Once let her get over the outrageous notion that she was an interior decorator on the strength of her honorable mention and the batik blouse, and she would undoubtedly go far. That was all right; Stephen should not grudge the progress, as long as she took her steps along another line.

"My dear Miss Baird," he began, emphasizing his words with a wagging pencil. "Let me give you a little earnest talk, which you probably won't listen to." He shook his head humorously. "If you've got a family behind you, your way is straight and easy. If not, get a job, and take my advice for the evenings. You'll get farther and be better off in the end, my dear, if you can bring yourself to face it now."

"You mean," said Vivian Baird, "that I'd better take some more courses before I call myself a decorator, I suppose."

"Take your courses," Stephen said gravely. "Take you courses, by all means, Miss Baird. But take them in stenography."

"Father!" Malcolm remonstrated, but Vivian Baird turned on him like a flash.

"I don't need mediation, if you please, Mr. MacGregor," she said. And then there were two angry youngsters in the room. She looked back at Stephen sitting behind the desk, already wishing he had used a little more of the tact which he had never had. "Thank you so much for your advice," she went on evenly. "I've no doubt it would be very valuable advice for one sort of girl. Frankly, it's no good for me." She gathered up her gloves and drew them on; then she inclined her head gravely to both of them, and with her eyelids very stiff and her chin very high, she opened the glass door before Malcolm could reach it and before old Stephen could get to his feet, and was gone.

Malcolm stared ruefully at the quiv-

ering door, and Stephen stared at his son. He was not so old that he could not know that the anger and fury of the girl had been dictated to her by her humiliation and pride, and that the humiliation and pride were magnified a thousandfold because the brown eyes of Malcolm had seen her debasement. He dropped into the speech of his own youth unconsciously.

"Son," he said, "I doubt ye'll hate me for it, but I could not use the lass just now."

Still looking at the door, Malcolm lighted a cigarette. He turned around abruptly, flipped the match out the open window, and dropped down at his desk.

"Finkelstein & Wildfeuer just wrote asking us to do the interior of a new Bronx outrage. I had Miss Mathews say it was hardly our line," he said.

Stephen looked at his son under his heavy brows; for the first time he felt baffled and snubbed by him. There was no use following that line, then.

"If the letter's not gone, I advise reconsidering," he remarked, more grim than ever.

"Do a movie!" Malcolm exclaimed, aghast. He sat back and stared at his father.

"The way things are going, we'll do well to think twice before we refuse to do a doll's house," MacGregor said. He pulled at his wiry mustache and shook his head.

"Mr. Huntington Williams," he went on, with deep sarcasm, "has decided that the chair I have spent half the summer buying is not what he believed, and he will not have it."

"Well, the poor, benighted——" Malcolm started. He stopped from sheer disability to put the asinine quality of Mr. Huntington Williams into adequate words. "He commissioned you to buy it! You went to Scotland for that and nothing else! It's as pure a piece of Jacobean as he'll find in a

century. What's the matter with the idiot?"

Stephen still shook his head. Malcolm's indignation was balm to him; he found himself being not quite completely sorry that Williams had proved such an ass, since he felt himself re-established in his son's eyes.

"Well, as I see it," MacGregor began slowly, "I think one thing when I hear 'Jacobean' and he thinks another. It makes no difference to him that I know what I'm talking about and he doesn't. Because he's made up his addle head that he was going to see—well, something in early Italian, so far as I can make it out, he holds I've misrepresented." He shook his honest shoulders angrily and hunched his head between them.

Malcolm whistled. He clasped his hands behind his head and stared at the ceiling, tilting back in his desk chair. He brought himself down suddenly.

"Oh, well, there's always the new Findlater house," he said, with returning cheer.

"That chicken's not hatched yet, either," MacGregor cautioned, but his tone was a degree less gloomy than before. "It'll do my heart good to get at that place, son. There's nothing we can't do with some of those good East Side houses, and Mrs. Findlater won't rest until every magazine in town carries an article or a page of interiors. Oh, well, things might be worse!"

Elsa Lorimer Findlater, already the blasé possessor of half a dozen houses sprinkled over the country, had but recently been bitten with the East Side bug, and had bought herself the most thoroughly disreputable-looking place within a mile of Gramercy Park. Inside, the house was dark and close-walled and stuffy, but the door was a joy and the house itself could not have been better built. Stephen's hands itched to get at it, to tear down partitions and put a brick square in the

tiny back yard under the ailanthus bushes. Two houses and a yacht already had been decorated for Mrs. Findlater by the MacGregors, and never yet had they been the victims of her rather notorious capriciousness. There was a sort of assured stability about their relationship which was very comforting to the house of MacGregor. For while she lived, Elsa Findlater would certainly have a new house every year or so, and in the intervals she was always getting deeply involved in an intrigue with a different period.

"When we've got that in hand, we'll take the girl on and give her a chance," MacGregor said, softening. "I doubt she'll be much good, but we can find something to keep her busy."

"Great Scott!" Malcolm cried. "I haven't her address!"

He stood up and looked at his father in consternation.

"She may come back and try again?" Stephen hazarded mistakenly. Malcolm gave a snort of such incredulity that his father felt abashed.

"Not likely!" Malcolm said briefly.

"Well, some trifling lady decorator will take her in, I don't doubt," he said. Trifling lady decorators were anathema to him.

"I'll be going along, dad," Malcolm said, to Stephen's surprise. He had supposed that the classing of the tall girl with such triflers would spur Malcolm to angry defense. Somehow, Stephen wanted Malcolm to speak of her. There was a disturbing quality of maturity about his silence.

It was not the last time that Stephen was to feel strange in the weeks which followed. In the period of their greatest prosperity, when he and Malcolm had hardly seen each other for days on end, he had been less lonely. They had been preoccupied, but it was the preoccupation of comradeship, each so engrossed in affairs which had all the other's attention that any time either of

them broke into speech, communication was immediately established. Now, for the first time since the first absorbing year of Malcolm's college course, Stephen felt that Malcolm had always to come back from some far speculation before his attention was really centered on what Stephen had to say. They sat leagues apart in the same office, and the separation was all the more acute because there was so little real business to give them excuse for absorption.

The lady decorators of Stephen's fury seemed to have cut in very neatly on their preserve; for five years Stephen had noticed their encroachments with contempt. This year, he had to admit, they were really a menace. The firm of MacGregor had a masculine clubroom to do; they undertook the theater of Finkelstein & Wildfeuer, but the coveted Findlater house unaccountably eluded them.

October came in, clear and sharp; it melted a little toward the mid-month into gentle, reminiscent warmth. Boards came down from Fifth Avenue windows, and the enshrouded heads of caretakers were seen bobbing behind the gleaming panes. Stephen watched these manifestations with strange nostalgia. This was the time when his services should have been most in demand. He sat gloomily in the glass-enclosed office, trying not to speak to the rapt Malcolm of his misgivings.

Toward the end of the month Miss Mathews came into the office one morning, her prominent eyes alight with the joy of imparting news.

"Have you seen across the street?" she asked happily. Old Stephen looked up and shook his head. She beckoned to him and tiptoed out. Sure enough, across the street workmen were swinging a scaffolding into place, and cans of paint stood in the areaway of an unimposing little house. Malcolm came up behind them and stood with his hand on his father's shoulder.

"Um. Looks pretty good," Stephen said.

"Yes, doesn't it?" Miss Mathews gloated happily. If a house was being renovated beneath the very nose of the firm of MacGregor, it would be only decency to ask MacGregor to do its interior embellishment.

"Well!" said Stephen—he had an access of courage—"no reason why we shouldn't write to Mrs. Findlater and ask her what she has decided to do, is there?"

"I'd wait," Malcolm counseled vaguely. He turned back into the inner office.

The house across the way grew steadily more cream-colored. The day came when its shutters were painted and window boxes set out, painted a powder-blue. Stephen pulled his mustache, staring across at it through the plate glass of MacGregor's second story. There was something disquietingly sophisticated about the appearance of the little house. On the morning when the hinges and the beveling were picked out with safflower red, even Miss Mathews' hopes were dashed.

"They—they must have had advice," she ventured, twittering in a way which drove Stephen mad.

"Why shouldn't they?" he demanded ferociously, diving into the inner office.

For two days the house across the way was tacitly disregarded. The firm of MacGregor accepted a commission which brought forth curses whenever the members dwelt upon its ignominy. Fortunately, while their capitulation brought neither joy nor appreciation, it promised to bring gold again into the office. The Jacobean chair went to a purchaser with intelligence and taste, and Stephen's wintry gruffness melted. On the third day Miss Mathews appeared again, beckoning mysteriously.

"Come and see!" she entreated them.

Stephen and Malcolm got up smiling tolerantly and followed her into the

front office. A few feet back from the plate-glass window they stood in an attentive group.

A little wrought-iron stand had been put up beside the low doorstep, its two hooks mutely inviting a swinging sign.

"Tea room, I guess," Miss Mathews hazarded, peering out, finger on lip. Stephen and Malcolm exchanged kindly glances behind her.



Turning a little, she looked straight up at their windows, and tossed her head disdainfully.

"Why! Look! Look, Mr. MacGregor!"

They whirled back again, and for a moment they stood, all three of them, bending forward in a ludicrous identity of attention.

The door of the house had swung back. A tall girl in a blue smock came out, a scrolled sign held in her arms. Her brown head was bent over it jealously, and going down

the one step she stood on tiptoe and hooked the board into place. Then she stood back a step, wiping her hands down the sides of her smock, looking at the sign with pride. Her head hid its words from them, but in just a moment she stepped back and, turning a little, looked straight up at their windows. She tossed her brown head disdainfully and stepped back.

The girl was their girl! And the sign! It read:

Vivian Baird.
Interior Decorator.

With a last toss of her head, she stepped inside the house, and the blue door shut with a slam.

"Good heavens!" said Malcolm; and "Great Cæsar's ghost!" said Stephen; and, surprisingly "Well, can you beat that!" Miss Mathews said.

Then they looked at each other, and while Miss Mathews and Stephen exchanged glances of the deepest

indignation, Malcolm's face showed only dismay. Looking at his son's face, Stephen suddenly felt his own viewpoint change; the board stood, interpreted by Malcolm's anxiety, not so much for the tall girl's defiance as for the sign and symbol of a disastrous venture.

"Hmph!" Stephen growled. "Hoped I'd nipped a bud, but I'm afraid I've set a shoot." He strode back into his office, shaking his head and pulling his mustache viciously. Miss Mathews followed with her head in the air. But Malcolm stood there, looking at the closed door that hid Vivian Baird.

When he went back to the office, he was smiling a little. Stephen was standing at the rear window, his hands clasped behind his back. The adjoining house was unregenerate; it flaunted its commonness under Stephen's aristocratic nose. Every one of its windows was filled with mattresses and pillows and blankets—a myriad jeering tongues thrust out at the austere correctness of MacGregor's. Stephen spoke without looking around.

"Son," he said, "ye'll never know how bad I feel about this. If I'd held my tongue a little, if Huntington Williams hadn't just been making such a fool of himself, if I hadn't been feeling a little rocky as I always do my first day on land, the child wouldn't have done such a terrible thing. I don't mind telling you," he went on defiantly, "that I never saw a girl I liked better."

"That's good!" said Malcolm, and his tone was so excessively cheerful that Stephen whirled around on him. His son was rummaging among his papers with an air of almost fatuous content.

"Hmph!" he growled. "I suppose it's nothing to you that the child's bound straight for shipwreck under your very nose."

"The point is," Malcolm broke in, "that it is under my nose." He twirled

around in his chair and faced his father. "Dad," he said, "she hasn't a chance, and I know it, but I love her nerve—setting herself up right where we'll have to trip on her. If I went over there now, she'd show me out in three seconds, and I shouldn't blame her. But my idea is to stick around and watch every move she makes, and when things get *too* stiff, I'll go over as an ambassador and beseech her to bring her color ideas over here."

"Um," commented Stephen. "Well, maybe it's providential we haven't any more orders on hand, if you're going to spend your time watching every move across the street! How do you think we're going to pay any one?"

"Oh, I guess we can," Malcolm said cheerfully. "One way or another I'm going to be taking care of her soon."

He got up and went to the front of the shop.

For two weeks it really looked as if Malcolm's plan would go through without a hitch. The powder-blue door remained conspicuously closed. When it did open, Miss Vivian Baird swept in and out, her head always very high, a brief case invariably under her arm, looking very occupied indeed. Now and then a meek charwoman stole in and out the areaway, but she did not look harassed by work, and it was the opinion of MacGregor's that all she had to do was dust a little. Malcolm grew more and more cheerful, Stephen grew more and more humorously grim, Miss Mathews, who had long ago abandoned indignation for pity, grew more and more anxious about Miss Baird.

In the third week Malcolm began to talk about negotiations.

"Well, I think I'll run over and see if she'll speak to me," he ventured.

"Don't let her think she's doing us *too* much of a favor—" old Stephen began, when the cataclysm occurred.

Miss Mathews burst in without rapping, and gasped for breath.

"Oh!" she cried. "Oh, Mr. MacGregor! That little cat! She's got Mrs. Findlater!"

"What!" shouted Stephen and Malcolm as one man. They went without dignity to the front window; then, suddenly conscious of ignominy, they darted behind any furniture which was near and craned around it. Her huge, imposing new car was drawn up before the little cream-colored house.

"Are you sure?" Stephen asked, but even as he asked it, doubt was dispelled. The blue door flew back, and in its opening stood Elsa Lorimer Findlater, making gracious farewells, obviously at once the patron and the protector.

"Well, I'm damned!" said Stephen furiously. All at once he became conscious of the lack of dignity which had characterized the last few weeks, the peering and planning and jumping behind screens. He stamped back to his office in a rage. Malcolm followed slowly. "Perhaps ye'll be able to get some work done, now that she's provided for," Stephen said bitterly to him.

"Perhaps we shall," Malcolm agreed listlessly. Stephen glared at him, but he seemed totally unconscious that he had perverted his father's words. He put on his hat absently and slanted out. Stephen grunted and slammed down the top of his desk.

From that day the powder-blue door was very busy. About eleven o'clock each day it would begin to swing back and forth, and cars of various sizes and sorts would draw up across the way. Quite frequently the huge cream-colored car stood for hours before Miss Baird's swinging sign, and the callous Mrs. Findlater showed not the slightest compunction or regret. Stephen was grim.

As the fall went on, MacGregor's held its own very decently, but the procession of its patrons looked very meager when compared to that of its young rival. But Miss Baird, now that

she was firmly established, showed occasional signs of returning friendliness; her head was not so high when she went out, and she was reported as having nodded to Miss Mathews.

Not the least of Stephen's anxieties was Malcolm's misery. He ground out work relentlessly, as uninterested and as effective as a machine. He spoke once of the establishment opposite.

"I suppose I'm a hound to be disappointed," he said, and left Stephen to guess what he was disappointed over, and why he was ashamed.

Dull days went on until November was nearly over. And then one afternoon the climax came. Malcolm had gone out and Stephen sat alone in his darkening office. He heard the quick, trotting footsteps of Miss Mathews in the outer office, and presently he realized that she was not alone. She gave her quick nervous rap at the door and flung it open. In the doorway, silhouetted against the light outside, not at all defiant, not at all remorseful, stood Vivian Baird.

"Mr. MacGregor?" she asked, and then she saw him standing against the gray windows. "May I come in?" she asked. "I'd like to propose something."

"Do," Stephen said. He pulled forward a chair for her and made as if to turn on the light. Then he reconsidered and stood rocking on his toes.

"Well, it's this," Vivian Baird said, her clear young voice fairly dripping with cheerful condescension. "I have Mrs. Findlater's house to do, and I'd very much like to have your help."

The office became very quiet.

"You'd—I beg your pardon?" Stephen asked incredulously. There was nothing in his voice to show his wrath, and unwarned she went on.

"You see," she said, with pretty courtesy, "I think you were right. I don't know all I ought about decorating. But I do know a great deal about getting good effects, and I have this perfectly

corking piece of work. I thought perhaps you wouldn't mind combining with me." Her young magnanimity filled the small office to suffocation.

For a moment old Stephen felt fairly on the point of stifling. Perhaps if he had been an earnest reader of business fiction, he might have realized what the child was trying to do—make her services so valuable to him that he would offer to buy them outright. But old Stephen rarely read fiction. The affair presented just one aspect to him, and that aspect enraged him. He switched on the electricity suddenly, and at the sight of his set face, Vivian Baird stood.

"Miss Baird," he said, "I don't doubt you feel that you have some reparation to offer. I thank you. We should not care to combine on Mrs. Findlater's offer." He went to the door and held it open.

The girl's temper was certainly not her weakest point.

"Reparation!" she began furiously, but Stephen broke in.

"Miss Baird," he said quietly, "for some time I've been a mild fanatic along one line. I have believed, and I've had no reason to change my belief, that there was nothing more disgraceful than the way unprepared women have set themselves up as interior decorators in the last few years. I know no other profession which is so openly pursued by people who have no training, no real idea of it at all. I was brought up in a town of weavers, and there was little I did not know about textiles when I decided what my work was going to be, but I took what time was needed and learned that little. I spent five years in the office of an architect; I read and traveled and listened to every intelligent authority I could find in order to learn periods and true antiques. I spent thirty-five years to make myself fit to be called a decorator, and I've brought up my boy to respect a difficult profession."

Vivian Baird stood with her hands tightly twisted and looked at him steadily. He went on:

"Ten years ago there weren't above a dozen people in New York who had the courage to call themselves decorators, but that's changed now. Within the past three years I have seen more shops opened by people professing to do the thing I studied thirty-five years to learn than could have opened honestly in a century. Every woman with a little leisure and an urge to do something has gone into it—every woman too lazy, or too stupid, to learn to do anything well has tried to get into a decorator's shop or has opened one for herself. If they can talk a little about values, and atmospheres, and 'tying it together,' they feel amply ready to hang up their swindling sign. Women like you, my dear Miss Baird, are undermining a real profession; they are forcing men and women who have worked and studied long and hard to undersell their services and their goods; they are discouraging thoroughness and decent preparation. If Mrs. Findlater's house is too difficult an undertaking for you to carry through alone, I am very sorry. I cannot help you, and I am sure you will see why. You undoubtedly know that we have done everything that Mrs. Findlater has needed in the past five years. If she had been anxious for our services she would have come to us again."

Vivian Baird's face was very white, and her eyes, almost on a level with his, were wide and dark.

"Oh," she said very low, "I didn't realize——"

Her voice broke and she looked at Stephen pleadingly. But he was bowing to her very courteously, with the door held wide, and there was nothing she could do except go through it. Miss Mathews had gone, and she went through the deserted outer office quickly, and Stephen heard the heavy

door opened and closed with meticulous quiet.

For a long time Stephen stood looking down, his hands behind his back. At last he shook his head slowly. The door flew back with a bang and Malcolm leaped up the steps.

"Dad!" he said. "What's up?"

Stephen looked at him inquiringly. He had never had many words when he was much moved, and his peroration had used up more strength than he had realized.

"She took down the sign," Malcolm went on. "What's the matter? Has she gone under?"

Stephen shook his head. His mouth tightened.

"She offered to share the work on Mrs. Findlater's house with us," he said. "I said we couldn't consider it under the circumstances."

"What else did you say?" Malcolm demanded. Stephen lowered his eyes and looked at his son intently. His anger had left him tired and sick and very distressed. Now that the girl had gone, he remembered how quiet she had been at the last, and how dark her eyes had been in her white face.

But Vivian Baird spoke from the doorway.

"He said only what was true," she said. She came into the room and went to stand before old Stephen.

"I took down the sign, Mr. MacGregor," she said, "and I called up Mrs. Findlater and told her I was worthless, and it's all right. I mean, she was furious, and she said I was cheating when I set up to do decorating, and that it served her right for not coming to you in the first place. I only said that she was quite right and hung up the receiver."

Old Stephen stared at her, and then suddenly his look became more gentle than Malcolm had ever known it since his own babyhood.

"And so," she went on quickly, "I

just wanted to tell you that I didn't *mean* to cheat, Mr. MacGregor, and I only did it because I loved to work with pretty things, just as you said, and—and use my hands, I suppose. I didn't think any farther than that, even after you talked to me that first day I came in. And then I wanted to show you for some reason"—she stumbled on, while the reason stood beside her and was elaborately ignored—"so I started over there." She motioned with her head across the street.

"I'd never forgive myself if I thought I'd hurt your work at all," she said steadily, "but I know I haven't. Your work is worth something, and mine never was—not much." She held out her strong, smooth hand to him. "I'm sorry I've annoyed you and troubled you and acted like an idiot. Tomorrow morning I'm going to look for work, and to-morrow night I'm going to start to learn—stenography, maybe. Anyway, I wish you all the luck in the world."

Stephen held the firm hand tightly, too moved to smile.

"My dear," he said, "I couldn't be prouder of you, if you were my own child."

Malcolm came up beside her and they stood shoulder to shoulder before him.

"You'll make me very happy," he said, with a gentleness which made his gruff voice irresistible, "if you will come in here and let me teach you all I know about our profession. As my son once said, with a foresight I foolishly discounted, we need a color sense like yours in the business. I've no doubt at all that one of these days we'll be taking you into the firm."

Suddenly his sharp eyes twinkled at them from beneath heavy brows.

"And I've no doubt, either," he said, enjoying his own indiscretion, "that on that day the name 'MacGregor' will do for the three of us."

The Madness of Sargenson

By Margaret Pedler

Author of "The Lamp of Destiny," "The Splendid Folly," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY CLARENCE ROWE

The moving story of a brilliant pianist who emerged from the war tone-deaf, and what his loyal, plucky wife did for him.

A LONG the dripping streets strode Miles Coventry with a swinging, purposeful step, too much engrossed in his thoughts to heed either the rain which drove in his face or the occasional glance of swift surprise meted out to him by more than one passer-by.

He was well known by sight to the concert-going public, and it was a matter of some astonishment to the one or two persons who recognized him to encounter him thus, tramping through the rain with such supreme indifference to the possible effect of damp upon that golden voice of his.

But Coventry was a man first and a singer after, and hitherto he had found that fresh air and no fads had not hurt him at all. And on this particular afternoon he was going to see the woman he loved, going to congratulate both her and her husband upon the latter's return to the normal ways of life.

Inevitably his thoughts harked back over the years of his friendship with the two Sargensons. It had begun in their mutual student days, when they had all three been glowing, young enthusiasts at the shrine of music and had only strengthened through the years of professional work which followed.

There had never been any question as to which of the trio of friends was the most gifted. René Sargenson, the brilliant young Norwegian pianist, had far outstripped the other two, flashing like a streak of flame into the front

rank of executive musicians, while Coventry had merely achieved a safe footing as a popular baritone, and Dolores a certain steadily increasing reputation as an accompanist.

But the friendship had held throughout their varying fortunes, held even when each of the two men knew that he loved Dolores, and afterward when she was Sargenson's wife. From the first Miles had realized that it was the Norwegian, with his nimbus of sun-gold hair and his changeful sea-blue eyes—sometimes ablaze with fiery enthusiasm, sometimes mystic with dreams—to whom her heart was given. Therefore he had set his teeth and held fast to the dual friendship which had made life so well worth living, and never, by word or sign, had he allowed Dolores to guess the truth. She only thought of him as the staunchest pal in the world.

Then had come the war. René's father, Norwegian by birth, had been a naturalized Englishman, his mother of half-French, half-English extraction, and René, with the glorious ardors of both France and England stirring in his blood, had hurled himself into the fighting line with all the fervor of the queerly intermingled patriotism which fired him.

He and Coventry had been lucky enough to obtain commissions in the same regiment. Dolores had kissed them both when they went away, and through all that followed Coventry had carried in his heart the memory of her

young face with its shy, brave eyes and the maddening sweetness of her soft red lips against his cheek.

It had been he, not Dolores, who had tried to dissuade Sargenson from taking on a fighting risk before it was necessary. There were so many with less rare gifts. Always, throughout the years in Flanders, Coventry had felt that save when death, which all men paid equally, was the price, the gods of his country were asking Sargenson, Sargenson, whose wonderful musician's hands meant everything to him, to risk a bigger stake than most men.

And till within a month of the armistice it seemed as though the gods themselves realized this, for René came and went unscathed, though he was worn fine by the hourly strain of it all on hypersensitive nerves.

Then, one gray October day, a shell screamed its way along and buried itself somewhere beneath Sargenson's dugout. There was nothing much left of the dugout, and of Sargenson only the whimpering shell of a man which cried like a child at the least sound and hid its face behind shaking hands.

But it was all over now, that horror of the past. The infinite skill of doctors and nurses and the healing of time had combined to restore the wrecked nerves, and René Sargenson had been sent back to his home cured.

Coventry quickened his steps involuntarily. It would be good to see his friend again, to grip his hand and read in his eyes the old familiar welcome. He ran eagerly up the steps of the Sargensons' house and pulled the bell, and a minute later he was holding Dolores' hands, pouring out joyous felicitations and inquiries for René in the same breath.

"He's—he's not in yet," said Dolores at last.

Something in her voice—a note of fear, almost—struck him with a sudden doubt. Wasn't it all right? Oh, but

it must be! She had written to him, telling him that her husband was coming back to her, cured. And she had smiled her happiness and relief when he had first entered the room. Coventry searched her face. The acute anxiety of the last year had gone from it. The lines of strain were relaxed. But there was something else, new and unaccustomed, in it, a strange look of bewilderment tinged with underlying fear.

"What is it?" he said. "Isn't it all right?"

She was silent for a moment, struggling with herself. It was always an effort to Dolores to reveal her thoughts. She was naturally shy—shy with that intense, ineradicable reserve which is so often found in conjunction with big emotional capacity.

"Tell me, Dolores," urged Miles gently. "If there's anything wrong, you must let me share."

"Yes, I'll tell you," she said at last. "You'll have to know sooner or later."

"What is it? You don't mean he has changed at all?" There was a hint of anxiety in the quick question.

For a moment her gray eyes grew radiant.

"No," she answered, an infinite content in her voice. "He is René—just René as he always used to be."

"Then—then——"

"It's his music!" she burst out violently. "That's gone!"

"Gone? But it couldn't be! He's out of practice, that's all. A few months will put it right. Remember, he didn't touch a note while he was ill. Don't worry over that, Dolores."

She didn't seem to be listening. Her attitude was that of one who merely waited for him to finish uttering futilities.

"You don't understand," she said. "He went to the piano almost at once, when he came back last evening, and played atrociously. It was like a child playing! No, worse! Wrong notes,



"Tell him? I can't tell him.
I daren't! I think it
would kill him."

chords which were just a hideous nightmare of sound. If he attempted a chromatic run or a quick arpeggio, it was no more than a blur. *And he*

didn't know it—didn't hear it. He sat there with that rapt look on his face, you know how he looks when he is playing divinely?" There was a little

choke in her voice. Coventry nodded silently. "Well, like that; all eager and glowing, with his eyes shining. I know he thought he was making the most glorious music. And it was all just one mad, crazy discord. And then he jumped up and came across the room to me, bubbling over with delight. 'I haven't lost much, Dolores, have I?' he said. 'Isn't it amazingly good luck?' Miles, it was ghastly!" She shuddered.

"What did you say? You didn't tell him?" he asked.

"Tell him? I can't tell him. I daren't! I think it would kill him." She paused, then went on tonelessly: "But that isn't all. He's made up his mind to give a recital quite soon. And—and he's going to ask you to sing at it."

Before Miles could reply, there came the sound of quick footsteps. Dolores' upflung hand checked his answer on his lips.

The door flew open, and Sargenson came in. Miles turned to greet him with a feeling akin to dread. But it was the old René whom he saw, the same slender, erect figure with its eager gesture and boyish face, the same sea-blue eyes with the veiled, creative fire slumbering in their depths, ready at any moment to flame into a glory of achievement. Coventry was struck anew with the sheer vitality of the man, the arresting vividness which seemed to radiate from him as the light from the sun.

"Miles, old chap!" And in a moment he was pump-handling Coventry's hand up and down like a school-boy just home for the holidays.

"By Jove, it's good to be back!" he exclaimed. "We three, you and Dolores and I—just as we were before. Oh, it's good!"

He beamed at them both, and the talk rattled along, question and answer tumbling over each other in the spontaneous joyfulness born of reunion.

Coventry was struck by the other's absolute normality. René seemed to have completely thrown off the oppression of war with its final shattering of nerve and balance, and to have emerged unscathed in both soul and body. Miles wondered with a sudden pang of apprehension whether Dolores' story of his lost musical ability could possibly be some wild figment of her own imagination. She had been living at a strain for so long, with not only the fear of death before her, but with that other, hourly dread lest René should be incapacitated as an artist. Now when the danger was past, it might be that the relief had proved too great for her, so that in her own mind she had conjured up into the reality of fact the fear which had beset her.

Coventry was beginning to feel convinced that this was the explanation. In a way he felt thankful, thankful that René's great gift was unimpaired. But of course it meant that Dolores must be looked after, cared for, and nursed back to health.

"I ought to play better than I ever did before." Sargenson's ardent voice broke across the other man's anxious thoughts. "The experience of war, the closeness to life and death—the *sounds* I heard, Miles! I shall find them all taking form, coloring the new stuff I mean to write. And my fingers haven't lost their cunning, either. It's astonishing!" With his habitual impetuosity he crossed swiftly to the piano. "Listen!"

Coventry knew one tense, palpitant instant of unspeakable fear, of surging hope. Then came certainty, indescribably hideous certainty.

His teeth clenched in the effort to drive from his face every atom of expression which might betray the truth. He stood and listened to the discordant riot of sound which poured from beneath René's fingers.

The man's hands swept the keys with

what seemed to be their old facility. And the result was a rhapsody of crazed musicianship. It was like some horrible parody of Sargenson at his best. Meaningless successions of notes came with a delicate, appealing tenderness of touch; barbarous crashes of dissonant intervals, which smote the ear, thundered out with all the precision, the wonderful capacity for sonorous tone, of fingers which had been wont to draw the whole pulsating value from every chord they struck.

Coventry listened, appalled. And as though to add a last macabre touch to the scene, René's face was the face of an immortal, with rapt eyes which held the mystic radiance of the musician's fire. Watching him, Miles knew that, in spirit, Sargenson was caught away into familiar worlds of music, mentally aware of exquisite melodies which he believed himself to be interpreting to the two who listened. And through some obscure severance of faculty this chaotic hodgepodge of discord was the result!

Coventry's gaze slid from the man at the piano to the woman who was his wife. She was sitting quite still, her small hands clenched tightly together, her face a blank, emotionless mask. Presently, when the last chaotic notes had jarred into silence, René looked across at her with the accustomed eager questioning in his eyes.

"Well? Do you like it?" he asked.

Coventry felt the sweat break out on his skin. And then it seemed to him Dolores did a rather wonderful thing. She sprang up and ran across the room, just as he had seen her do a hundred times in the old days when René had been playing to them and had surpassed himself, and she took her husband's outstretched hands in hers.

"Oh, René!" she exclaimed. "It was wonderful!"

Her smile held the same glad triumph in his work as it had been wont to do.

Her voice seemed to quiver with excitement. It was the most magnificent piece of acting that Coventry had ever seen.

And it satisfied Sargenson. He smiled contentedly at his wife.

"I'm glad you like it," he said. "I think I shall include it in the program for my recital. By the way, Miles, has Dolores told you I'm going to open with a recital? And I want you, of course, old man. It will be like the good old times, our giving a recital together again."

Coventry never quite knew how he got through the discussion which followed—the plans and suggestions for the projected concert. Only, when at last Sargenson went off to speak to some one on the telephone and he was left alone with Dolores, he found his limbs trembling. He passed his hand across his forehead and drew it away wet.

"You see how it is with him."

She spoke quietly. She had had the night in which to accustom herself, more or less, while Coventry's mind was still staggering under the shock.

"Good heavens, Dolores!" he broke out. "It's the most ghastly thing conceivable! Has he gone tone deaf?"

She shook her head.

"No. It's not that."

"Then, what is it?"

"That's what I was asking myself all through the night." She smiled rather wanly. "Then this morning René began practicing. Practicing!" A little shiver ran through her body. "So I slipped away and went straight off to see Sir Raeburn Fores. He's the man who knows more about René's case than any one else. And I told him just what had happened."

"What did he say?"

"He knew. He had heard René trying the piano one day, just before they sent him home."



The result was a rhapsody of crazed musicianship. It was like some horrible parody of Sargenson at his best.

"Then if he knew, why didn't he prepare you?" demanded Coventry indignantly.

"He did. He wrote to me from his

place in the country four days ago. The letter came this afternoon! Probably it was dropped and left lying in some dusty corner of the village post

office. Anyway, through somebody's carelessness it was delayed."

"Well, what did Fores tell you? Is there any hope of René's recovery?"

"Yes, there is hope. But Sir Raeburn says he can't tell, in the least, how long it may take. He says he might recover suddenly—any day, to-morrow, or"—her voice shook a little—"he may never recover at all."

Coventry stifled an ejaculation of dismay.

"But he's sane, as sane as you or I."

"Yes, he's sane every other way. But there's some obscure mental condition, nevertheless. Couldn't you see that all the time he was making that dreadful noise on the piano, he himself, in his own mind, was hearing real music? Wonderful chords and melodies, just as he used to. *And he thinks he is expressing them.* It's as though some cell in his brain were lying dormant, not working, so that the connecting link between his thought and the expression of it is broken. That's how Sir Raeburn described it."

Coventry nodded.

"Yes. That describes the thing exactly. It's appalling. Worse than if he'd been injured physically. Dolores, who's to tell him?"

"*No one!*" The words ripped out from her white lips. "I won't have him told! If he knew, I think he'd go mad. Sir Raeburn says the only chance is to carry on as if he were all right."

"But—but—it can't go on! Some one *must* tell him."

"No," she repeated firmly. "No one shall tell him. He's cured, really. Everything else has come back. His brain's working quite normally every other way. And his music will come back. It—oh, *it must!*"

For a moment she faltered, blenching from a possibility too horrible to contemplate. Then she steadied again.

"It will come back," she reiterated.

"That one brain cell, or whatever it is that isn't acting, will recover, just as the rest of his brain has recovered. It isn't as though he'd ever received any physical injury to his head. It's only a matter of time. I'm sure of it. And meanwhile, I'm going to pretend it is all right."

"Pretend?"

"Yes. Behave exactly as though he could play as he used to, until he actually does play like that."

"But you'll find it unbearable!"

"There is nothing unbearable," she said quietly, "if you choose to bear it."

Coventry was conscious of a quick thrill of admiration for her pluck. But, none the less, he knew that her plan was impracticable. Fores' advice might be the counsel of perfection, but it wasn't feasible in a present-day world.

"I'm afraid you can't keep him in ignorance," he objected gently. "You see, there's this matter of the recital. He can't give one. And he'll have to be told why."

"If he's determined to give it, he shall do so," she answered doggedly.

"Impossible! He'd be booed off the platform."

"No. Listen, Miles, I've a plan. And I want your help."

"You know you can count on that," he replied steadily.

She rewarded him with a smile.

"I do know it," she answered swiftly.

"And I've relied on that in making my plans. Of course, I shall dissuade René from giving a recital if it's any way possible, on the grounds that he's out of practice and that it would be better to wait. But if he persists in the idea, then he must be allowed to give it. And I want you, Miles, to sing for him."

She paused, looking at him anxiously.

"Will you?" she asked.

"Of course I will, if you wish it. But I can't see—oh, it's a hopeless plan, Dolores! The audience would almost riot. There'd be a frightful commo-

tion if René went on and played as he played just now."

"I don't think so. His public loves him. And I'm banking on that love. Anyway"—looking at him with steady eyes—"I shall risk it."

"There might be a very unpleasant scene," he began.

But she interrupted him.

"I shall risk it," she repeated.

Coventry stared at her amazedly. He had always regarded Dolores as exceptionally timid, nervously inclined to retreat from anything which might thrust her into prominence. Above all, he knew how she shrank instinctively from conflict or unpleasantness of any kind. And here she was composedly preparing to risk a scene from which a much bolder spirit than hers might flinch.

"My dear," he said, and there was a great tenderness in his voice, "you've no idea what a dissatisfied audience is like. People want their money's worth, and an audience that doesn't get it is like a balked beast of prey. You haven't the nerve for that sort of thing."

"I've the nerve to stand by René, by my husband."

"And if there's a row, how about René? He'd have to know, then."

"Why should he? Don't you understand that he doesn't realize in the least how he's playing? He wouldn't realize it any the more for a few cat-calls and booings. He'd merely think it was a disturbance intentionally organized by some one who wanted to do him a bad turn."

Coventry made a gesture of despair.

"Oh, you're impossible!" he declared.

But nothing that he urged could shake her determination.

Equally she herself was unable to dissuade Sargenson from his purpose of giving a recital. He was full of enthusiasm over the idea. Before Do-

lores could choose the moment to introduce her gentle suggestion that it might be better to defer the date of his first public reappearance a little while, he had booked the concert hall and advertisements flared forth in all the daily newspapers.

Applications for tickets poured in. Within a week every seat in the house was sold, and could have been sold twice over. Sargenson himself was radiant, joyously excited as a school-boy, and as the day approached his spirits rose ecstatically.

Meanwhile, to Dolores each day meant twenty-four hours of acute mental torture.

By dint of infinite tact and persuasion she had induced her husband not to play before any one prior to the day fixed for the recital and, with the solitary exception of Miles Coventry, not even Sargenson's most intimate friends had the least inkling of the real state of things.

Coventry, loyally prepared to assist at the recital by singing, could see no glimmer of hope on the horizon.

"We're heading straight for an almighty crash, Dolores," he told her. "It would have been better to tell him the truth and stand the consequences."

"No." She was steadfast in her belief. "Sir Raeburn said that he might recover any day, so each day gives a possible chance of his recovery before the concert. And crash or no crash, he's got to be shielded from the knowledge which might send him stark mad."

Coventry had come off the platform to the thunder of whole-hearted applause. The group of songs he had given had been enthusiastically received and the audience, its appetite pleasantly whetted, was now waiting good-humoredly in anticipation of hearing the pianist who had been London's idol previous to the war.

When he reentered the artists' room, Miles found that Sargenson was chatting cheerily with a friend. Dolores, who had been accompanying the songs, turned back at the doorway. Her face was very white, but her eyes shone steadily like two unwavering stars.

"I'm going to speak to them," she said in a low voice, gesturing toward the body of the hall whence came the sounds of impatient clapping.

"Do you mean you've persuaded René not to play?" asked Coventry eagerly.

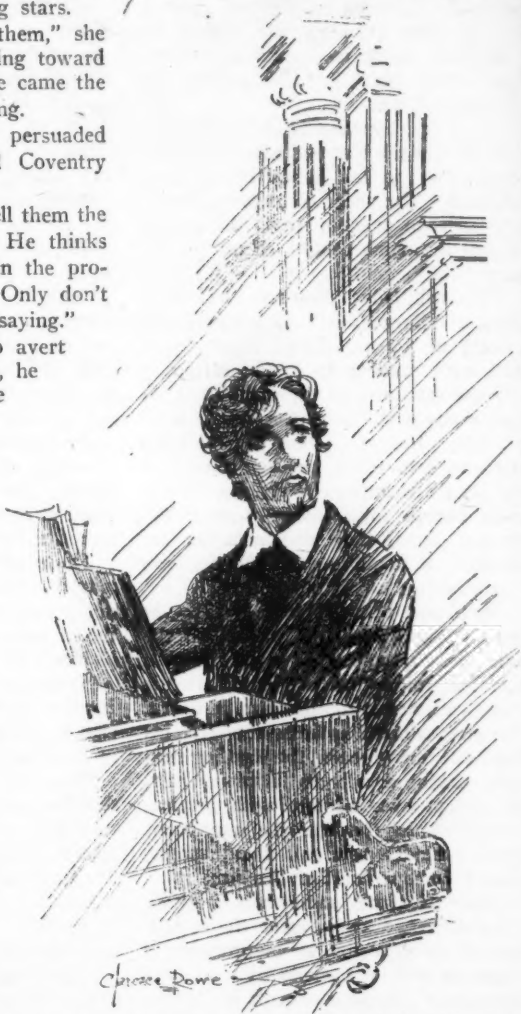
"No. But I'm going to tell them the truth before he goes on. He thinks I'm announcing a change in the program. I've worked that. Only don't let him overhear what I'm saying."

With a vague instinct to avert the crisis, to delay matters, he caught at her arm as she passed him. But she was gone through the door and up the steps on to the platform before he could stop her.

She looked very young and girlish as she faced the big audience, standing there with her hands hanging loosely clasped in front of her, her small head flung back a little, reminding one of some sensitive wild creature at bay.

A round of applause greeted her and died down into an attentive silence. Then in a tense, quiet voice, every note of which carried to the furthestmost ends of the hall, she told the big audience, which had gathered to hear her husband play, exactly what had happened.

"He has lost his wonderful gift fighting for us—fighting for you and me. It may come back some day. We don't know. But I know it would kill him to realize that he had lost it. Please, will you help me?" There was some-



The next moment a torrent of glorious music, blithe with melody, swinging with rhythmic chords, streamed out into the hall.

thing poignantly appealing in the simple, direct question. "Will you try and pretend—pretend he is playing just as he used to play?"

The great assemblage sat tongue-tied, breathlessly still, each component soul of it pierced by the raw tragedy of the thing, yet helplessly seeking for direction, unable to articulate the emotion which stirred it. The incident was so unparalleled.

Coventry, listening to the grave little speech and the blank silence which ensued, was on his knees in spirit to Dolores. The sheer courage of her!

And then a shout from the gallery voiced the dumb passion of pity of the multitude.

"We will, lady! You trust us! Sargenson! Sargenson!" The name was caught up by a hundred eager voices and went echoing up to the rafters.

René sat down at the piano, and his hands swept the keys in a few bars of prelude. For an instant the audience stiffened into tense, stricken silence at the jangle of impossible chords. Then, magnificently loyal to the woman who trusted them, they drowned the cacophony of sound in a tumult of cheers and clapping.

Sargenson bent his head gravely in response and began to play. To the mute listeners who had loved the man and his music, the poignancy of the scene was almost too great to be borne. The man himself so little changed, his fine head thrown back, the slanting sunlight making a halo of his tawny hair, his ardent eyes adream with inspiration, while all the time the once wonderful hands, reft of their magic, poured forth a flood of discord.

Suddenly, from somewhere outside, a street or two away, came the terrific blast of an explosion, submerging every other sound in a tornado of annihilating noise. The great concert hall trembled under the concussion; its windows

splintered into atoms. A woman at the back of the hall screamed shrilly. Some frightened attendant shouted "Fire!" In a moment panic seized the whole audience, and they surged up from their seats, stampeding exits.

At the first impact of thunderous detonation, Sargenson sprang up from the piano. For an instant he stood rocking on his feet, his hands pressed against his ears. He felt as though his head would burst. Then, all at once, his brain cleared. He realized the frightful menace of that panic-stricken rush toward doors and that he, and he alone, could check it.

He strode to the edge of the platform.

"Stop! Keep your seats!" he shouted, his voice ringing out like the call of a trumpet above the frightened cries and groans which ascended from the struggling crowd. "It's all right! *It's all right*, I tell you!"

He swung round to the piano and the next moment a torrent of glorious music, blithe with melody, swinging with rhythmic chords, streamed out into the hall.

The mass of pushing, struggling humanity checked abruptly. With suddenly uplifted faces, still white from recent terror, they stared toward the platform in sheer stupefaction.

Sargenson's madness had passed! He was once more the inspired musician they knew and loved. The miracle of it held them in stunned amazement.

Presently, as the glowing music throbbed on unbroken, they began to steal back quietly, one by one, to their places. And each man's thought was, "Sargenson has come back!"

In the artists' room Dolores, spent with effort, was holding on desperately to Miles Coventry's strong, kindly hand.

"It's been worth it all, Miles," she said shakily. "Because—now—he need never know!"

Next month another splendidly told, dramatic story by Margaret Pedler.



"Hampton Parade—4 Miles"

By Christine Whiting Parmenter

Author of "The Heartless Mr. Barney," "Celia, the Efficient," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ELIOT KEEN

A Summer Day Idyll.

A DUSTY young man with a ruck sack on his back seated himself upon a stone wall by a cross-roads and regarded seriously a guide-board before his eyes. It was the fourth guideboard of the same kind and wording that he had met in the last two hours: an ancient guideboard, bearing instead of the customary index finger, a prancing steed, galloping in the direction to be indicated. In fact, there were two steeds; one making haste in the direction of Epp's Crossing, the other taking an equally brisk gait to "Hampton Parade—4 miles."

The young man dropped his ruck sack to the ground and stretched himself. He had slept in a haystack, and so far had found no secluded brook for his morning plunge, though a wayside watering trough had done duty as wash bowl. He walked to the guide-board and politely addressed the coal-black steeds.

"The broad highway, good friends," he announced cheerfully, "undoubtedly leads one to Epp's Crossing. It is logical to suppose that Epp's Crossing leads one to the railroad. I have had enough of railroads, but I have had also enough of my own thoughts. I crave companionship, and methinks Hampton Parade hath a cheerful sound. It reminds one of floating banners and brass bands. To Hampton Parade we go."

He shouldered the ruck sack again and started on. It was not, he perceived at once, a well-worn road. In fact, in the course of a half hour it became a ribbon road, and dipped into a bit of woodland smelling deliciously of ferns and the welcome dampness of rushing brooks. The young man sniffed delightedly. There was a stream near by, which meant a bath and perhaps a nap under an ancient oak. He quickened his pace impatiently and was at last rewarded by sight of



"I am glad, fair maiden," said he, "that you allowed not false modesty to triumph over common sense."

a rustic bridge, beneath which rippled a mountain brook, leading straight into the forest.

The man followed the brook joyfully until he reached a spot designed by nature for his very purpose: a deep, clear pool beneath an overhanging rock. His bath once over, he proceeded to hunt the ancient oak, for his night on the haystack had not been restful; but his quest being unsuccessful, he at last lay down beneath a giant pine, looking up through the branches at the summer sky.

It was then that his thoughts reverted to that which he was trying to forget—one—Miriam! It was strange, he thought, that whatever his resolutions in that direction, his thoughts invariably returned to the forbidden subject. It

was not that he and Miriam had parted in anger. He knew from experience that lover's quarrels were soon mended. It was Miriam's amazing stubbornness which perturbed him. It was incredible that one so sweet, so young, so pretty, should be so firm. And about a thing so unheard-of—so preposterous! If—

And then even the ever-absorbing question of Miriam became blurred, and the young man slept.

It was the sun upon his face which woke him. He awoke quietly, hardly stirring indeed, and looked about with content. He watched idly a squirrel devouring a nut, then turned his eyes lazily toward the pool and with difficulty suppressed an exclamation. For a moment he thought it a hallucination.

Then he realized that what he beheld was true. Seated upon the rock, her bare feet dabbling in the water, was a maiden; a maiden of exceeding beauty, who was unquestionably unaware of his proximity. She, too, he noticed, was dressed for tramping. Her knapsack lay beside her on the rock; her khaki shirt, open at the throat, displayed a neck of dazzling whiteness. She wore no hat, and the soft breeze was blowing the tendrils of her brown hair alluringly. She was, the man decided instantly, the very prettiest thing ever made. He was wondering if he could keep so quiet as not to frighten her, when the squirrel began to chatter, and looking up, the girl discovered that she was not alone. She gave a startled cry as the young man sprang up.

For a moment silence reigned within the forest; then the man, bowing in courtly fashion, spoke gently, suppressing unsuccessfully a smile at the corners of his mouth.

"Be not afraid, fair damsel. I was but resting beneath yon venerable pine, and knew not that you were here. Rest assured that no harm will befall you while I am nigh."

The girl, after a moment's stare of incredulity, relaxed into what struck the young man as a delightful giggle; then suddenly remembering her position, she endeavored to pull her skirt a little lower, and exclaimed:

"Begone, sir knight!—or at least turn your back while I put on my stockings. I have an awful blister——"

"A blister!" interrupted the young man, advancing several centuries in his language. "Don't put on your stockings, then, until I fix it. If you'll let me strap it with adhesive plaster——"

"What do you take me for?" cried the girl, blushing.

"For the prettiest girl I ever saw," replied the young man boldly; "but I hope you also possess a grain of common sense. A blister is a serious thing

when one is tramping. Dry your feet in the sun and I'll fix you in a jiffy."

The girl obeyed with a meekness which was a contrast to his memories of Miriam. When her feet were dry, she accepted his services with gratitude, though her color deepened perceptibly during the ordeal. When at last the operation was completed to the young man's satisfaction, he smiled, and had he but known it, the girl thought it the nicest smile she had ever seen.

"I am glad, fair maiden," said he, reverting to his former manner, "that you allowed not false modesty to triumph over common sense. Now I will turn my back while you don your hose, and then if you will choose another resting place, I will build a fire on that rock and we'll partake of luncheon. Yonder sun, as well as a strange vacuum within, tells me the hour is nigh."

He moved away to rummage in his ruck sack. When, after a suitable interval, he turned about, the girl was shouldering her knapsack as if to go.

"Oh, look here," cried the young man eagerly, "won't you lunch with me? It's not every day that a man discovers a dryad beside a pool. I have some good, crisp bacon within my sack——"

The girl didn't giggle this time; she laughed, showing the prettiest teeth in all the world as she seated herself upon a stone, saying:

"The bacon settles it. I adore bacon and I am almost starved. I slept in a haystack——"

"You—what?" exploded the young man, frowning darkly.

"If you speak like that——" began the girl coldly. The man had interrupted miserably:

"But I do not approve of a lady in a haystack."

"I am not a lady," replied the girl, smiling. "Didn't you just admit I was a dryad? I suppose, true to type, I

should have sought my tree, but the haystack looked more comfy."

"I hope," said the young man severely, laying the sticks intelligently crosswise, "that you found it a more comfy bed than I did."

"You don't mean——" gasped the girl, blushing.

"I certainly do," was the reply. "I was anything but comfortable. The hay was forever tickling my nose. I have been sneezing ever since."

The girl laughed again; then watched silently while the man started the fire and toasted bacon. When at last he handed it to her between slices of bread and butter, she grasped it eagerly and set her teeth into it with relish.

"I had no idea that dryads possessed such appetites," said the man, smiling.

"I have had *almost* no breakfast," explained the dryad meekly.

"Of course!" The man shrugged scornfully. "What business has a girl—I mean a dryad, tramping the country by herself? You doubtless ate all your provender for supper."

"I did," the dryad acknowledged honestly, though she frowned at the man's tone, "but I didn't know it was so far to my destination, nor did I count upon the blister. I could not walk another step."

"A woman——" began the man stormily, then stopped abruptly and shut his mouth in a straight line.

"Well?" suggested the dryad, smiling at him out of the corners of her eyes.

The man refused an answering smile, but said politely:

"May I make bold to inquire, fair maid, your destination?"

"Indeed you may," answered the girl promptly. "I am to visit my old nurse at a hamlet not far hence, by name—Hampton Parade."

"Hampton Parade," quoted the young man dreamily, "'four miles.'"

The girl laughed merrily this time,

and stretched out her hand for another sandwich. "Hampton Parade must be four miles from everywhere. That's why I spent the night in a haystack. The last guideboard I struck discouraged me. My foot hurt, and——"

"I see," said the man. "Now, it is strange, but I, too, am bound for Hampton Parade. I have had three days of solitude and Hampton Parade sounds cheerful: floating banners, brass bands, and——"

He stopped, because the dryad was convulsed with mirth.

"You seem amused," said the man quietly.

"It is plain," replied the dryad, "that you have never passed this way before. I dislike immensely to disillusion you, but lest your hopes carry your feet in the wrong direction, let me explain that Hampton Parade is but a common; a common covered with ill-nourished grass and bordered by scraggy trees, around which stand houses resembling boxes. These houses are painted white, and each is bounded by a fence with a squeaky gate. They contain good, honest folk, perhaps, but not even a buxom dairy maid to reward you for the toil of getting there; and as for banners and brass bands——"

"Hush!" cried the man, "hush! My hopes are shattered! But, after all, it is more wonderful to discover a dryad than a brass band. There is but one thing troubles me. I perceive a diamond adorning the fourth finger of your left hand"—shades of Miriam!—"and would inquire if, perchance, you are betrothed."

The smiles fled from the dryad's leaf-brown eyes, and she said sadly:

"That is a question I am trying to decide. I wear the diamond only because I didn't know what else to do with it."

"It looks," said the man shrewdly, "like a good stone."



He saw in a swift glance that the dryad's breath came quickly. "There—there is a parson at Hampton Parade," she added hurriedly.

The girl suppressed a smile.

"It is a good stone," she responded quietly, "but after all, it is the man that matters."

"You have quarreled?" asked her companion sympathetically. "I trust it is not serious."

"It is very serious," replied the girl. "If you possessed a sweetheart and had quarreled with her, you would understand."

There was a silence, in which the man thought poignantly of Miriam. At last he said:

"A chap must be a bounder to quarrel with a peach—I mean a dryad, like you."

"He is not a bounder," the girl defended quickly; "but he is very set." Then she sighed, and added mournfully: "I fear all men are just alike in some things. He would have approved of the haystack no more than you did."

"That is because he loves you," said the man quietly.

"It is because he does not trust me," affirmed the girl.

"Rubbish!" exclaimed the man

rudely. "Women are the very dickens!"

"You know them well?" questioned the girl in gentle sarcasm.

"I do," answered the man miserably. "I am engaged to one, or was a week ago; but she has thrown me over. And all because——"

"Well?"

"We were to be married in the fall," continued the man dolefully, "and she decided quite suddenly that she must have a few days of freedom. Of course, I'll get no sympathy from you! She wanted to do what you are doing: tramp off alone and sleep in haystacks, encounter ruffians, and feed on berries! And when I indignantly refused to sanction such a scheme she—flouted me!"

The girl looked thoughtfully into the green forest.

"Perhaps," she suggested timidly, "had you been more tactful——"

"If a man must be forever tactful with his wife," stormed her companion, "life would hardly resemble 'one grand, sweet song!' Imagine composing tactful speeches while you devoured your breakfast! I have no doubt it would lead to indigestion. Still I am very miserable without her."

"If you would tell her so," advised the dryad gently, "it might be——"

The man sprang up joyfully.

"It was evidently foreordained, fair maid, that we should meet beneath the sylvan shade. Your advice is sound. The lady of my heart is stubborn, but I adore her. I will escort you safely on your journey and then make tracks for Epp's Crossing and the railroad; and I advise you to write immediately to Herbert—or Reginald—or whoever the poor devil is, and put him out of misery."

"You are surely generous with your advice," said the girl, rising and shouldering her knapsack, "but his name is Billy-boy."

They made their way out of the forest silently, save when the dryad gave vent to gentle moans, occasioned by the unlucky blister.

"For two cents," said the man pityingly, "I would carry you all the way; but Billy-boy might object, and if you'll lean upon me it will do as well."

He took her knapsack, and as she slipped her arm through his, they proceeded down the ribbon road.

"Somewhere near by," said the dryad after a long silence, "there is an old road leading to Epp's Crossing. I can easily proceed from there alone. Ah, here it is; and I see by the guideboard that my destination is still four miles distant!"

"They must have purchased those guideboards by the gross," replied her escort. "Now, I dislike to leave a lady in so lonely a spot; but since she's the kind who enjoys solitude and haystacks, and as there's a train for the city within an hour or two, I will say farewell. In writing your letter kindly remember me to Reginald."

"I—I did not say I would write the letter," hesitated the dryad. "Good—good-by."

"Good-by," said the man cheerfully; "it's been bully meeting you."

He strode away, but had not gone far when he heard a voice behind him. It was a meek voice, and all it said was:

"Please!"—and turning about the man saw that it was the dryad who had spoken. She was standing where he had left her by the guideboard, looking pathetically alone and very lovely.

Now, our hero was but twenty-six years old, and his pulse quickened. He suddenly forgot his quarrel with Miriam and why he was going to Epp's Crossing. He only knew that he overwhelmingly desired to take the dryad in his arms, but being a young man accustomed to control his impulses, he only came nearer and said gently:

"Can I assist you farther?"

"At Hampton Parade," was the dryad's irrelevant reply, "there is a flag-staff on the common."

A puzzled look crept into the man's eyes; then he smiled.

"Of course! I said there would be banners, and the Star-spangled Banner is best of all. Now, as for bands——"

"There is a one-legged shoemaker," hesitated the dryad, "who—who plays an accordion."

The man laughed a laugh which transformed him into a boy.

"Gee! Do you think he would give me lessons? I have always yearned to play an accordion."

But the dryad did not reply.

"And there's my old nurse," she suggested, "who's a delicious cook—and sometimes takes in weary travelers."

"The inn!" murmured the boy awedly. "Of course there would be an inn! I can smell the doughnuts!"

Then he saw in a swift glance that the dryad's breath came quickly.

"There—there is a parson at Hampton Parade," she added hurriedly.

"There always is in those God-forsaken spots," said the boy cheerfully, "but why——"

A look of faint discouragement crept into the dryad's eyes; then she said desperately:

"There is a town clerk."

"A town clerk!" echoed her mystified companion. "And how, pray, doth a town clerk improve the shining hours in a rural hamlet such as you describe?"

The dryad looked at the boy reproachfully.

"He—he makes reports, doesn't he—on births and deaths and—and marriage certificates?"

And then a miracle occurred right before the dryad's leaf-brown eyes. The boy vanished, and it was a man who stood before her. The banter was all gone from his gray eyes, and he folded his arms quickly, as if to keep them from doing some forbidden thing. He moved a step nearer and looked down at the dryad almost sternly.

"You—you're not playing with me now, Miriam?" he said.

Of course there was magic in the air, because the man saw at once that he wasn't speaking to a dryad, after all. He was speaking to a woman: a real woman, the sort of woman a man dreams of, whose tender lips were trembling just a little, but whose leaf-brown eyes looked straight at him without fear.

"Oh, Billy-boy," she said reproachfully, "how could you treat me so, when—when I love you so *terribly*——"

What immediately followed matters only to the dryad and the man. Of course, a public road is not the customary setting for the stage, but after all, it was only a ribbon road, and there was no other sign of life except two prancing steeds, one making haste in the direction of Epp's Crossing, the other taking an equally brisk gait to "Hampton Parade—4 miles."



RAIN IN MAY

YESTERDAY, burning heat
That the young leaves could not stay;
Now there are clouds; the beat
Of a reckless wind astray,
And those bright new leaves whipped back till the
very trees turn gray.

Rises a thickened blur;
In its whirl there are dust and mist
And broken leaves astir,
As the first drops fall—they hissed
Just now on the heated stones—and the lightning's
wicked twist.

The pavement's dark with wet;
The raging drains can hold
No further drop; and yet
Blue, limpid shreds unfold
High up, and a tinted curve hints at the pot of gold.

Of a sudden the gloom is past
With the rain and the hail's uproar;
Housewives fling back at last
The shielding, stifling door,
And we breathe in the clean, keen air the lilac's
heart once more.

JEANNIE PENDLETON HALL.



A SONG OF TWO LOVES

BEYOND the hill the city lies where love is waiting me,
Beneath my feet a rambling road runs to the shining sea,
And in my heart are two loves that do forever rend,
But I know, and the stars know, which way my feet will wend;
For fields are growing green again that were so gray before,
And the little lanes are budding, and holding spring once more.

Within my heart are two loves, and one is still and warm,
The other shakes my vibrant heart with its impassioned storm;
One offers quiet happiness, the other only lure,
But I know, and the stars know, and so my way is sure;
For fields are growing green again that were so gray before,
And the little lanes are budding, and holding spring once more.

HERMANN FORD MARTIN.



Walking over to the divan, Valentine took the dummy on his knee. And then the real fun began.

The Dummy

By John Lawrence Ward

Author of "The Concession in Marimba," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY H. T. DENISON

There is drama—tense and moving—in this strange mystery story.

THE Swints were taking in a performance of "Mary-Go-'Round," the best of that distinct Follies type of theatrical cocktail—concocted of the highest-class vaudeville acts strung together on a nebulous plot, furnished with an attenuated libretto, a tuneful score, a pulchritudinous chorus, and superlative scenery—which seems to have attained a permanent place in American amusements.

Max Slingman was the producer and manager, and Max Slingman's name on a billboard guaranteed the excellence of the offering. Those fortunate mortals who could afford to pass through the Gramercy Theater's gilded turnstile were generously rewarded, for

Slingman had shopped in the market place of talent and beauty with open eye, ear, mind, and purse.

The Swints were undeniably "good people." Confirmed theatergoers, they were catholic in their tastes, and overlooked nothing presented in New York at all worth while. So they were thoroughly enjoying Slingman's latest and happiest revue.

Slingman, with his usual adroitness, had arranged his brilliant hodgepodge in such strategic fashion that each scene seemed to eclipse the last, and just before the final ensemble he had massed his heaviest artillery: Isabelle Jenkinson, greatest of all singing comédiennes; Gino Veladi, the Caruso

of musical comedy; the exhilarating whirlwind Karyasaki Troupe; and the ever-popular ebony artist, Bud Harris.

After Bud Harris had droned his last inimitable song and shambled from the stage came a big, colorful, sensational act billed as "The Dancing Girls of the Ouled Nails." As this highly deleted reproduction of the streets of Biskra neared its conclusion, Schuyler Swint glanced at his program and was surprised and disgusted to note that the next scene—the place of honor on the bill—was given to an exponent of that ancient art, ventriloquism.

"The Great Valentine!" growled Swint sarcastically. "Shucks!"

He leaned over and touched his daughter lightly on the arm.

"Shall we go after this act is over?" he whispered. He always deferred to his daughter. "There are only two more numbers, a ventriloquist and the finale."

"What do you say, mother?" asked Pauline Swint over her shoulder. Her chair was placed to the front of the box.

"Oh, let's see it all," decided Mrs. Swint. "I understand this Valentine is quite wonderful and the hit of the show."

Mr. Swint settled himself comfortably in his chair again and grunted good-humoredly.

"The ayes have it. Hope you enjoy Valentine and his silly dummy. I'll take forty winks, for if there is anything in the amusement line I can't abide it's a ventriloquist." He took care, however, to keep his eyes open until the last lithe, dusky Dancing Girl had gyrated from the stage.

For probably ten seconds the house was in darkness, that thick, smokelike effect of fathomless blackness which can only be achieved in a theater, and then, by degrees, the dimmed footlights disclosed to the expectant audience the well-appointed living room of what was

evidently a bachelor apartment. The illumination waxed brighter and a ripple of merriment went round the theater as the solitary occupant of the room was revealed.

Placed left center on the stage, with its back to the painted drop which represented one wall of the room, was a large leather divan. Seated on one end of the divan was the figure of a small boy, tow-headed and ruddy-faced, with inordinately large eyes, a stubby, inconsequential nose, and a wide, impossible mouth. The dummy created the paradoxical impression of being both grotesquely unnatural and ridiculously natural, like a clever cartoon which exaggerates the features without dehumanizing the subject. The cunning modeler had imparted to the face a sly, mischievous expression, and the big blue eyes had been so carefully fashioned that they appeared to be aglow with the light of reason. To the amused spectators they held out a malicious promise to furnish them with some rare sport if they would but sit tight. One gathered somehow that the laugh would be at the expense of the other fellow. Altogether, a droll, mirth-provoking dummy and one that must have cost its owner a pretty penny.

The orchestra began to play very softly a haunting strain which would later become popular, and onto the stage from the right wings sauntered Valentine. The most blasé first-nighter would unhesitatingly concede that the ventriloquist had that rarest of gifts—a gift which oftentimes in the realm of Thespis more than compensates for indifferent art—that elusive, undefinable air called, for want of a better name, stage presence. He was admirably proportioned, and handsome without being offensively so, for his classic features were emphatically masculine. The eyes were calm, assured, and the lips firm. One felt instinctively that back of that perfect brow was naught

but serious thought and shrewdness, seasoned with the salt of caustic American wit. That was the impression the man radiated, and so it proved as his act developed.

His assistant, an elderly man, so obviously the typical serving man that one scarcely thought of him as being made up for the part, entered from a door at the rear of the room, relieved Valentine of his topcoat and hat and made his exit.

Valentine seated himself before the concert piano canted across one corner of the room, took up the melody the orchestra had been so softly playing, and the dummy began to sing. Here again the superior construction of the dummy became apparent. The perfect coördination of the facial muscles with the words of the song made the illusion of singing complete. There were no ugly gashes at the corners of the mouth, such as are common in most lay figures, to indicate the crude mechanism of the movable lower jaw. Evidently the face was skillfully fashioned of prepared rubber over movable blocks, and as the little figure was fully twenty feet away from Valentine, it was obvious that it was being manipulated by the elderly assistant, probably through an adjustable panel in the back drop against which the divan was placed.

This song trick is a standard one with almost all ventriloquists, but Valentine and his dummy did it exceptionally well. He made a deprecating little bow in acknowledgment of the generous applause, and, walking over to the divan, took the dummy on his knee. And then the real fun began. Valentine's complete mastery of his unique voice box was truly remarkable, but oddly enough his physical cleverness was overshadowed by the high-grade comedy of the lines and the intensely human individualities with which he had shrewdly chosen to endow his dummy and himself for the purpose of

the act. With his good looks, his cultured enunciation, and his well-bred air, he was the thoroughbred gentleman. Eddie, as he called the dummy, was without doubt a scoffer and a gross juvenile materialist with a penchant for asking impertinent questions and then passing ribald comment on the idealism of the answer.

Most human comedy has a cruel root. From the beginning of time man has tittered at the humiliation of the mighty, and he will continue to do so until the crack of doom. This is the fundamental rule and, incidentally, the sure-fire rule of buffoonery. And so, night after night, vast crowds of our best citizens laughed until their sides ached at the ubiquitous Eddie's efforts to ruin the character and complacency and the ideals of the gentlemanly Valentine, honestly forgetting for the time being—and there could be no greater tribute to his art—that they were being cozened by the genius of Valentine.

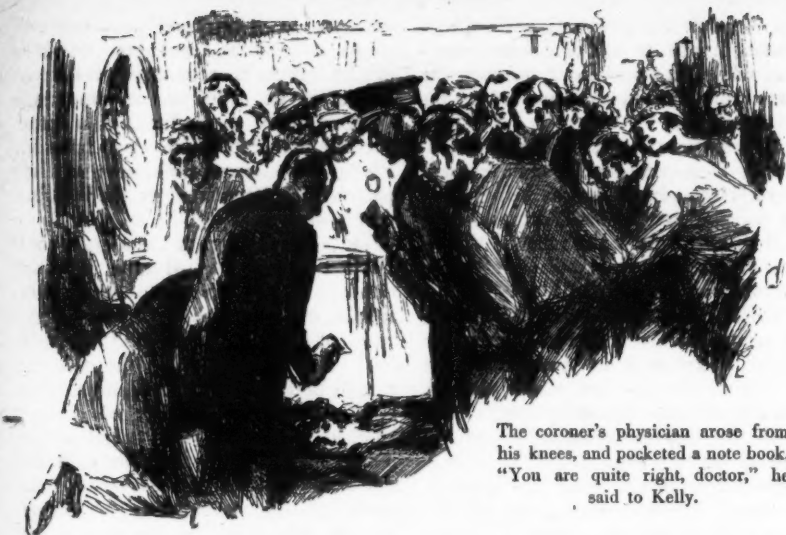
Valentine concluded his act by pretending to become vexed at Eddie's guying and stalking off the stage, leaving the repentant little rascal sitting on the divan, bawling noisily. The house rocked with laughter, but the thunderous applause failed to coax the high-priced Valentine out front again, and shortly the house darkened for the last scene.

Schuyler Swint, the gentleman who detested ventriloquism, wiped the tears from his eyes.

"By George, Elizabeth," he declared, his voice hoarse from its unwonted exertion, "that chap is a wonder. I haven't laughed like that in years."

"Oh, isn't he great!" raved Mrs. Swint. "Didn't you enjoy him, Pauline?"

Pauline Swint turned her lovely face around and regarded her mother composedly. Her thin, black, finely-lined brows were arched quizzically and she raised one white shoulder.



The coroner's physician arose from his knees, and pocketed a note book. "You are quite right, doctor," he said to Kelly.

"Yes. I thought him quite clever," she admitted. "And he's amusing. I suppose, if one cares for that sort of thing."

She looked away in the direction of the stage, and magically the bored indifference was gone from her face. Her dark eyes were warm and glowing, her white, even teeth bit hard on the scarlet underlip, and a faint rose pink tinted the old ivory of her cheeks.

There was not such an unbridgeable chasm between Pauline Swint, the million-dollar patrician, and John Valentine, the mountebank, as one would suppose. The Swints knew personally many stage folk, and it would have been a most natural occurrence if Pauline Swint had, sooner or later, met John Valentine casually, had Valentine been any other type of man than that which he was.

The ventriloquist's private life was singularly quiet and dignified; it bore out the impression of innate gentility his public demeanor suggested. Together with old Saunders, who combined the duties of stage assistant with

those of gentleman's gentleman, he occupied a comfortable suite in the eminently respectable Hotel Buckingham. He seldom dined in popular restaurants, consistently cut jolly parties, ignored all notes from foolish women, and politely, yet firmly, circumvented any attempts to intrude upon his reserve. Saunders was an excellent buffer. He was a silent, austere old fellow, endowed with rather a ponderous solemnity, and with a noticeable leaning toward the religious.

So Pauline Swint was obliged to descend to mild subterfuge to bring about a meeting with the one man who had awakened her emotions. As organizer of a benefit performance in behalf of a worthy post-war charity, she impressed the services of Max Slingman, and with a woman's cleverness molded the complaisant manager to her own ends. Slingman succeeded in enlisting Valentine's interest in the charity show, and in due time found the opportune moment to formally present the player to Miss Swint.

There was no doubt about Valen-

tine's complete fascination, and soon he was a regular visitor at Swint House. Schuyler Swint and his good wife considered the impending crisis with two minds. They had always liked to think that Pauline would eventually marry Doctor McMillan Kelly, who had been worshiping Pauline faithfully since childhood, so naturally they were a bit disappointed. An actor! Well, the war had wrought many changes, particularly in social levels, and really, when Schuyler Swint began careful inquiries into his prospective son-in-law's past, he was agreeably surprised.

John Valentine was the sole surviving member of a once-wealthy, respected San Francisco family. His dabbling in college theatricals stood him in good stead when the collapse of the family fortune forced him to shift for himself. A natural musician and mimic, he drifted into the theatrical game and soon developed his voice-throwing act. By way of interlocking vaudeville circuits he worked his way east toward Broadway, and was fast making a name for himself when the war broke. He had enlisted at once, and served twelve months abroad creditably. Upon his return to New York, he took up his old profession and was immediately signed up by Slingman. He discarded his old-fashioned act, which called for a dozen different lay figures, and built up a new skit around the figure of Eddie, which he had purchased from a puppet maker in London. An advertisement inserted in a theatrical journal had brought him old Saunders, and by the time "Mary-Go-'Round" opened at the Gramercy, he had perfected the polished piece of comedy which made him the overnight hit of the season.

So there was really nothing about the man or his known life which could be objected to by the Swints. To tell the truth, they were just a little bit in

awe of his extreme punctilio and reserve. They wished oftentimes, now that they had tacitly accepted him, that he would unbend a trifle and respond to their friendliness with a mead of human warmth.

McMillan Kelly took his grievous hurt like the sportsman he was, and even attempted, as far as was possible, to set up a friendship with the man who had won. Valentine interested him keenly from a physical viewpoint, and he even tried discussing with the ventriloquist the strange, uncanny accomplishment which has come down through the centuries from the days of ancient priestcraft.

The winter went on, and "Mary-Go-'Round" continued to pack the Gramercy nightly. Max Slingman made many trips to the bank and wished the season had three hundred weeks. Valentine's fame was assured and Eddie's quaint vulgarisms were current slang. The ventriloquist's romance had progressed, and three weeks before the end of the season the engagement was publicly announced and Valentine advised Slingman that his marriage to Pauline Swint would terminate his stage career. He agreed to remain with the show until the last New York performance, as the wedding was not to take place until a week after that date.

"Mary-Go-'Round" closed at the Gramercy Theater on the last Saturday night in March. There was to be a week's rest, a few changes were to be made in the show, the most important of which was the withdrawal of Valentine from the cast, and then the company was to take the road. Notwithstanding the long New York run and the unseasonably warm weather, the house was comfortably filled. On this night those patrons of this particular brand of entertainment who were present got a little more than their money's worth. The players, anticipating the

short vacation, were at their best, even though they did ignore the strict discipline somewhat and take such liberties with the smooth-working lines and business as would not have been tolerated by the manager on any other occasion.

Off stage there was even greater evidence of this high tension, last-night hilarity and verve. The corridors and stairways were filled with chattering, giggling chorus girls; there was much visiting between dressing rooms; great stars beamed graciously on lesser planets and became more cordial and forbearing with one another. Gino Veladi, the Italian tenor, was the proud possessor of a polite, sentimental little jag and swaggered through the corridors in his medieval costume, making pretty speeches to the ladies of the chorus.

Circulating all about among his children, tobacco-wrapped cigarette poised in the exact center of his full-lipped mouth, his pudgy, beringed hands jammed into the funny little front pockets of his trousers, kindly Max Slingman hobnobbed and fussed, petted and scolded, promised and denied.

Even the reserved Valentine appeared to be mildly affected by the general good humor and levity. Several minutes before he was due to go on, he arrived in the wings near his entrance, carrying the dummy.

Slingman and a half dozen principals were chatting in animated undertones. They welcomed Valentine into the group with friendly smiles. Watchful, dependable old Saunders hobbled up and held out his arms for the dummy, in order to be prepared to place it in its customary position during the brief period between scenes. As Valentine swung the dummy toward Saunders, its head craned comically at Slingman and one eye wrinkled in a most insidious wink.

"Hello, Sling, you fat little devil," jeered the flippant Eddie; "who's the

henna-headed houri you lunched with yesterday?"

Only the crashing fortissimo of the music prevented the illy suppressed laughter which followed this act of lese majesty from being heard out front. Slingman's head snapped back and his mouth and eyes formed little circles of astonishment. He glared at the dummy and then at the hilarious witnesses of his discomfiture. Then he grinned sheepishly.

"That dummy!" he wheezed good-naturedly. "That dam' dummy! Sometimes I think he is bewitched. And such a liar he is!" He rounded on Valentine and shook his forefinger at him in mock anger. "You make jokes with me, John? You give the old man the laugh, hey?"

But Valentine was not laughing. He had steadied himself with a hand on the whitewashed wall. His face was haggard and gray, and fine drops of moisture showed against the grease of his make-up. His throat was pulsating oddly, and his eyes were fixed on the leering Eddie with an expression of complete bewilderment.

"What's the matter, John?" asked Slingman quickly. "You sick?" He eyed his star with genuine concern.

Valentine pulled himself together and dabbed his forehead with a pocket handkerchief.

"It's nothing," he answered slowly. "Just a trifling nausea. My throat—my throat is a bit sore. Quite all right now."

He handed the dummy to the waiting Saunders, whose old eyes were troubled as he turned away.

Valentine carefully adjusted his opera hat, drew his topcoat about him, and made ready to go on. The little coterie around him and Slingman scattered as the Dancing Girls of the Ouled Nails dashed into the wings, dashed out again, took their last call, and scampered past to their dressing rooms.

The last girl, a full-eyed, voluptuously formed Oriental type, stopped for a moment and, apparently imbued with the bohemian spirit of the night, plucked at Valentine's sleeve, gazed up into his face, and said something in rapid, breathless French.

Valentine inclined his head gravely and she passed on.

"You should kid me about the women!" chuckled Slingman, who had observed the little incident. "I guess I go tell the dummy. By golly, that little Nicolette, she only been here a week and so soon tries to make dates with Valentine."

Valentine drew a long breath.

"I didn't hear what she said. I was thinking about something else."

"Yah!" snorted the wise old Slingman. "'Bout some other woman, I betcha."

The orchestra began its fascinating melody, and the great Valentine stepped out on the stage for his farewell appearance before the public. To Slingman and the little knot of players gathered in the wings, confidently expecting to be treated to a sparkling performance, sprinkled lavishly with the pungent extemporaneous wit for which the ventriloquist was famous, Valentine's work was dull, indifferent; in spots it came perilously near to being crude. He did not seem to have his wits about him, and his quips were forced and flat. Also, Eddie appeared to have turned traitor completely. His responses were slow, indistinctly articulated, and sometimes far-fetched and irrelevant. Altogether it was the poorest performance of Valentine's career. His nervous manner intimated that he, too, was conscious of his defection, and he shortened the act noticeably. He omitted the pseudo quarrel with Eddie, and contrary to his usual procedure left the stage with the dummy in his arms.

"Feelin' bad, ain't you, John?"

greeted the sympathetic Slingman. "I see you after the show. I fix you up."

Valentine's face was wretched under his make-up. He brushed past Slingman without a word, ignored Saunders, and with Eddie still in his arms started for his dressing room. Half-way to the entrance of Star Alley—the corridor which served the principal dressing rooms—he collided with the tipsy Gino and the dummy was knocked to the floor. Saunders came hurrying up as fast as his weak legs would let him, but Gino, who had recovered his balance quicker than Valentine, picked up Eddie, and elaborately restored him to his owner.

"Let me have Eddie, sir," suggested the deferential Saunders.

"I'll take care of him," replied Valentine shortly. "Run over to the drug store, Saunders, and get me some aspirin. I have a slight headache."

Saunders hesitated for an instant, and then, meeting his master's cold, imperative eyes, turned obediently away.

"You didn't broke the dummy, did you, John?" asked Slingman anxiously.

Valentine inspected Eddie's head and tried the internal mechanism several times.

"Apparently undamaged," he answered. Then he continued in an indifferent tone. "No great matter, if he had smashed. His usefulness is at an end to-night."

Slingman made a grimace of revulsion. For some reason Valentine's remark struck him as heartless.

"Don't say that, John," he protested. "He's a great little feller. Sometimes I think the little son of a gun is human maybe, like me and you, hey?"

Valentine tucked Eddie under his arm, waved aside Gino's verbose apologies, and strode into Star Alley.

Slingman gazed after him with growing concern. He had half a mind to follow Valentine to his dressing room,

but the final scene was on, and the stage demanded his attention. The space in the wings about him was deserted save for occasional misty, scented, rustling shapes brushing past him in the blue shadows to group themselves silently at their stations and await the cue which would bring them out to swell the brilliant finale.

So he failed to see the graceful, barelimbed form which stole across backstage and slipped into Star Alley.

But one other did.

Gino Veladi had been seized with the notion that another little swig from the bottle in his trunk would lend an added mellowness to the robust voice with which he dominated the closing choruses, and was stealthily making his way toward that same corridor when he espied the girl enter it so surreptitiously. Gino looked about him sharply. There was nobody to observe, so he stepped into the corridor, close on the girl's heels.

The finale was well under way and going along splendidly. With the exception of Valentine, who never appeared in the ensembles, and Gino Veladi, whose cue was the very last, all the performers apparently were on the stage. Slingman did not know about the recreant little dancing girl. He lit a fresh cigarette and addressed some commonplace to his assistant, Skelvin, who stood beside him. The trumpets in the orchestra blared the high, silvery tones which heralded the appearance of Gino Veladi, but even higher than the note of the horns came to Max Slingman's finely-trained, sensitive ear the faint, heart-chilling scream of a woman.

The cigarette dropped from Slingman's mouth, and his heavy hand fell on Skelvin's arm.

"What was that?" he cried hoarsely. "I thought I heard a scream. You heard something, hey?"

"I heard something, Max," declared

Skelvin. "Sound came from Star Alley, I thought."

With all the lightfootedness of a fat man Max made for the corridor, Skelvin right behind him.

"Here! What's this?" bellowed Max. "No lights in the Alley! What the hell?"

Several stage hands, scenting something amiss, gathered near, and Skelvin dispatched one of them to the electrician.

"Get some lights here quick!" roared Max, feeling his way in the dark corridor.

"Here's a pocket flash, Max," stuttered the excited Skelvin.

"Give it!"

Max snatched the flash, but just as he pressed the button a door far down the corridor opened and the tall figure of Valentine was revealed in the sudden flood of light from inside the room. They saw him bend over and peer curiously at something on the floor and heard his calm, "What is going on?" And then the few low candle-power bulbs which served Star Alley flickered into sickly radiance and revealed a strange scene.

Huddled on the floor was the little dancing girl. She was lying on her right side, her knees drawn up to her body, her face completely hidden by the thick bobbed hair resting on her outflung arm. Her small, plump hand, palm upward and fingers daintily curled, almost touched the spot on the threshold where Valentine stood.

On his knees at her head, his barrel-like body swaying drunkenly, knelt Gino Veladi.

He was clumsily smoothing her hair and muttering over and over again:

"Whass matter, keed? Whass matter, keed?"

A few feet away, crouching against the corridor wall, her sallow, unattractive face distorted into the horrid sem-

blance of a tragic mask, was Tracey, Isabelle Jenkinson's maid.

"What's wrong? Has the lady fainted?" asked Valentine. "Will a drop of brandy be of service?"

"Out of the way, you, Gino!" ordered Max sharply, and he gave the Italian a back-hand buffet which toppled the tipsy one over.

Max sank down on his knees with much groaning and wheezing, and, tenderly slipping his hand under the thick mat of hair, turned the girl's face up to the light. The feeble illumination lent a ghastly significance to the pale, lifeless countenance, the partly opened mouth, and the sightless eyes.

Miss Tracey screamed again:

"Oh, God! She's dead!"

"Keep shut, stupid!" shouted Max angrily.

"She's dead! She's dead!" shrieked the hysterical one. "She's been murdered. Look at her breast!"

Slingman moved the body slightly.

"Ach! Ach!" he wheezed. He raised his hands, and stared stupidly from his outspread, dripping fingers to the haft of the knife which protruded from under the firm, youthful breast.



The crowd shrank back against the walls to make way for the two officers and the shackled wretch between them.

Young Skelvin was the first to get a grip on himself.

"Listen, Max," he whispered rapidly; "Doctor Kelly is outside, for he left his name at the office in case he was wanted. Shall I call the police?"

"The police?" repeated Max dully. "The police? Oh, Gott! Yes. Of course, Freddie. But the doctor first. There might be a chance. The doctor, quick!"

Skelvin pushed his way through the buzzing, gaping crowd of players which was rapidly filling the corridor, and Max motioned to one of the stage hands.

"Here, you! Help me carry her into Valentine's room."

"Don't move her, boss," advised the man. "Better wait till the cops come."

"Hell with the cops!" shouted Max. "Suppose she ain't dead yet? Suppose—" He choked, and big tears coursed unrestrained down his fat, quivering cheeks. "Who did this? I ask it! Who killed this poor little kid?"

A loud, angry cry interrupted him, and Gino Veladi lurched to his feet. He seized Slingman by the shoulders and shook him savagely.

"Who keel who?" he demanded thickly. "What you talk about, old fool? My Nicolette? My beautiful Nicolette? She's no dead. She is just sick. Nobody keel Nicolette. You are crazee, fat old pig!"

There was a ripple in the ranks of the horrified onlookers who packed the narrow corridor, and Isabelle Jenkinson, her eyes blazing and her voice shrill, confronted Gino Veladi.

"You killed her yourself, you beast!" she cried. "You have been trying to force your attentions on her ever since she joined the show. That's your knife in her breast, and there are the fresh marks of her nails on your face!"

"No—no—no!" implored Slingman. "Stop, Isabelle. You must not. Fool-

ish womans! You would let jealous talk maybe send Gino to the death house. Not another word!"

But Isabelle Jenkinson, racked by the torments of the woman scorned, loudly and stridently called attention to the four bloody stripes on Gino's cheek.

There came an ominous muttering from the crowd, and Slingman jumped in front of the Italian and frantically waved his arms.

"No—no—friends! Wait! Wait for the police."

Several men pushed past Slingman's protecting arms and reached vengeful hands toward Gino. And then they hesitated, awkwardly, uncertainly, for Gino Veladi had thrown himself beside the body on the floor and was sobbing wildly.

The coroner's physician arose from his knees, pocketed a notebook, and wiped his fingers on his handkerchief.

"You are quite right, doctor," he said to Doctor Kelly. "Nothing can be done. She has been dead fully twenty minutes. I would say death was instantaneous. A powerful, well-directed thrust, let me tell you!" He turned to the men from the thirty-ninth precinct and continued: "I'm through, gentlemen. The case is in your hands."

Detective Sergeant Meaghan, at an almost imperceptible nod from his superior, Inspector Hanniford, immediately took charge of affairs. Meaghan was a tall, bulky man, active in his movements and quick of speech. He was a clever man, resourceful and courageous, and he proceeded to dig out the facts relative to the crime with celerity and intelligence.

"Who is the girl?" he asked Slingman.

"Her name is Nicolette Landry," answered Slingman, who knew all his people intimately. "She has only been with the show a week. She is a French girl and can't even speak it United

States yet, but she was mighty pretty—you can see for yourself—and a fine dancer. So far as I could see, she was a nice little kid and behaved herself."

"Well, what do you know about all this?" interrupted Meaghan.

Max related all that had transpired since he had heard Miss Tracey's first scream, and Skelvin corroborated him.

"Mm, I see," rumbled Meaghan. He mulled over Slingman's story and then focused his impersonal gaze on Miss Tracey, who had recovered appreciably from her hysterical condition.

"You are Miss Tracey? Miss Jenkinson's maid? It was your scream Mr. Slingman heard? Yes? Very good." He fired his volley of questions rapidly, but kindly enough. "Now, Miss Tracey," he went on, "just tell me in your own words what you know of this?"

"I don't know anything about it, sir," quavered the plain-visaged little maid, "except that I—that—I—" She stammered and floundered, and displayed such unmistakable signs of imminent collapse that Meaghan came to her assistance with a gentle question.

"What were you doing in this corridor, Miss Tracey?"

This request for definite information steadied the lady and she told her simple story lucidly.

After dressing Miss Jenkinson for the last scene, she had remained in the room, putting it in order, packing a valise, and otherwise performing the many petty tasks incumbent upon the maid who desires to expedite her mistress' departure from the theater. One of Miss Tracey's duties was to be standing in the wings at the final curtain, ready with a cloak with which to enfold the dainty Isabelle. So she had thrown the cloak over her arm, turned out the electric light—evidence of a thrifty soul—and stepped out into the corridor. She noticed that the corridor was in total darkness, but, thinking

nothing of it, was feeling her way carefully when suddenly she stumbled on what seemed a human face. She screamed and pressed back against the wall. In a few moments Mr. Valentine opened his door and almost at the same time Mr. Slingman, Mr. Skelvin, and several stage hands came running into Star Alley, and the lights flashed on. And then for the first time she saw the Italian and the girl. That was all. A simple, unquestionable statement.

"So—I see," said Meaghan slowly. Then he cracked out a question. "What was the matter with the lights?"

Miss Tracey blinked frightenedly. An electrician hastily volunteered the answer:

"Blown fuse, sir."

"And it didn't affect the lights in the dressing rooms?"

"No, sir. Separate line, sir."

"So. What's your name? How? Brown—Joe Brown? Odd name. All right, Joe. Much obliged. Now then, Mr. Valentine?" Meaghan hung the question in the air and surveyed Valentine expectantly.

"I'm afraid I can contribute very little real information, sir," said Valentine, shaking his head dubiously. "I've been suffering from a nasty headache this evening and, after sending my man out for a sedative, I lay down on the couch in my room. I must have dozed off, for I wasn't certain for a minute whether I had actually heard a scream or dreamed it. I decided to investigate, however, and so I opened my door and saw—well, just as it has been told you by the others."

Meaghan strode into Valentine's room and threw a swift glance around. It was a typical dressing room, with one or two exceptions, about seven by twelve in size, with a window draped with neat cretonne curtains. It contained a dresser, a lavatory, a trunk, a leather couch, a comfortable-looking easy-chair, and two plain ones. There

was no closet, but across one corner of the room a wardrobe had been improvised by hanging a large pair of heavy curtains from a curved brass rod.

Meaghan's trained eye took in all these details, and then fell on the dummy sitting on one of the small, plain chairs placed in front of the wardrobe. The detective's heavy face relaxed in a smile.

"So that's the famous Eddie," he growled. "Damned thing looks almost human, don't it?"

He turned on his heel and walked out into the corridor.

"Well, who else knows anything about this?" he asked casually, looking at nobody.

Isabelle Jenkinson, still smarting under the injustice of the handsome tenor's desertion, was a voluble witness. Despite numerous warning glances from her manager, she sacrificed the man she loved to the green-eyed god.

"Mm! So!" grunted Meaghan, when she had finished in a gust of wordless fury. "So you think Gino killed her? Well, well! Say, doc," he turned his cold, fishy eyes on the coroner's physician, "could a woman have sunk that snickersnee home?"

The crowd gasped; Max Slingman groaned; Isabelle Jenkinson went white and groped for the sustaining arm of Tracey; the coroner's physician looked troubled.

"Why—yes—I suppose so," he answered. "A strong woman, a woman actuated by a—ah—"

"Exactly so," grunted Meaghan, and he swung around on Isabelle Jenkinson.

"Where were you?" he thundered. But Miss Jenkinson had slid gently to the floor.

Max Slingman explained that, much as he deplored Miss Jenkinson's vindictive attitude toward Gino, she could not possibly know anything about the crime, as she had been on the stage

for at least five minutes before he heard Miss Tracey's first scream.

"Mm. So."

Once more Meaghan relapsed into meditation. The crowd in the corridor, feeling instinctively that all this cross-questioning was merely the precaution of a thorough investigator, braced itself for the obvious dénouement—the arrest of Gino Veladi. They were not to be disappointed, for Meaghan emerged from his abstraction and fixed his baleful gaze on the wretched Gino, who was leaning weakly against the corridor wall, a uniformed officer on either side of him. Veladi squirmed under the fierce, sustained inspection, and his hands plucked at his silly, feathered cap incessantly.

"Well?" snapped the detective. "How about you? Everybody seems to check up but you. What have you got to say for yourself?"

Gino was thoroughly sober by this time, but he made a poor witness for himself. Under the stress, he wandered off into his native tongue, and Meaghan, who was a graduate of Mulberry Bend, stood patiently by and let Veladi convict himself in two languages.

The Italian's story was a singular mixture of apparent truths and unbelievable denials. He admitted pestering the girl with his attentions, which he frankly stated were distasteful to her. He said that just before his last appearance on the stage he decided to have one more drink, and as he was hurrying to his room he saw Nicolette slip into Star Alley. He overtook her about halfway down the corridor and attempted to embrace her. At this point, Gino declared, the corridor lights went out. The girl made no outcry, but she fought him so fiercely that he was glad to release her and take refuge in his room and comfort in his bottle. He realized that she had scratched his face, but in his drunken indifference

he paid no attention to it. He gulped four or five drinks, and then, suddenly fearful of making a belated appearance in the finale, started on a half run down Star Alley. He fell over the still figure on the floor and, knowing instinctively that it was Nicolette, knelt by her and attempted to get her to speak to him. He was distracted at the thought that he had unwittingly injured or shocked her. Then Miss Tracey, in turn, had stumbled against him, and a minute later he was discovered in his incriminating position. He admitted the knife which had let out the girl's life was his—a part of his costume in fact—and that he had worn it that night as usual; but he steadfastly denied that he had as much as drawn it from its sheath.

"You think I keel her—my Nicolette?" he cried at the finish of his maundering. "Why should I keel her? I love her—love her! Even if she don' love Gino, I love her. But justa you wait till I find the man who keel Nicolette. I bet you by—" The breath whistled savagely through his clenched teeth; his inflamed, sodden eyes peered wickedly through the disordered black hair, and his hand flew like lightning to the empty sheath at his girdle. Then he went to pieces again and buried his twitching face in his cupped hands.

Meaghan glanced at Inspector Hanniford and raised a significant eyebrow.

"Get it all, chief?" he whispered quickly. And then, as the taciturn Hanniford made a little gesture of helplessness, Meaghan went on: "Fine combination! A wop, some whisky, a woman, and a knife. If that don't spell murder, you can have my badge. Well, I guess we are all through around here. Dead open-and-shut case, as far as I can see."

He gave a sign to the two alert policemen, and in an instant the weeping Gino was locked to their wrists.

"Gino Veladi, you're under arrest for

the murder of Nicolette Landry," intoned Meaghan, and then added carelessly the law's ironic injunction: "Anything you say will be used against you. Take him out to the car, boys. I'll be with you in a minute. All right, Mr. Slingman. These people can go now. Tell 'em to hold themselves ready for the coroner's inquest. Much obliged to everybody. Going downtown with us, chief?"

For the first time since he appeared on the scene Inspector Hanniford spoke:

"No. Not necessary. You can handle it. I'll stay around here a while."

"All right, sir," answered Meaghan. "I'll send the wagon around for the body."

"I'll wait," said Hanniford.

The crowd shrank back against the corridor walls to make way for the two officers and the shackled wretch between them. Meaghan lit a cigar, and with the air of a man who had handled a nasty problem in snappy, regulation fashion walked briskly down the corridor.

The usual morbid tendency to linger around the scene of a tragedy made the work of clearing the theater of such a large company as "Mary-Go-'Round" a rather difficult undertaking, but there were few who cared to stand against Slingman's present temper, and in a remarkably short time hollow silence settled down on the Gramercy.

When Slingman finally got back to Valentine's dressing room, he found a depressed, solemn little group. Doctor Kelly, who had chosen to remain, was lounging in the easy-chair. Inspector Hanniford had preempted one of the plain chairs, mate to the one on which the dummy sat in ludicrous, vacuous dignity, and Valentine was standing at the dresser, drawing the cork from a tall, slender bottle of brandy.

"There are times, gentlemen," Val-

entine was saying in his quiet, formal way, "when spirits are almost a necessity. I believe this could be called one of them. Don't you agree with me, Doctor Kelly?"

Doctor Kelly nodded assent and accepted the glass offered him. Slingman sat down heavily on the trunk and held out a shaking hand for a drink. Hanniford declined with the proper excuse that he was still on duty, so Valentine, Kelly, and Slingman each poured themselves a stiff portion and drank it off slowly and silently.

"Another, gentlemen?"

They declined.

"No? Then you will pardon me if I proceed to wash up? Thank you."

Valentine removed his dress coat, waistcoat, collar, and cravat, loosed his shirt at the throat, rolled his sleeves back over powerful forearms, and turned to the lavatory.

Slingman lighted a fresh cheroot with trembling hands, and addressed a question to Hanniford:

"Where—what did you do with——"

"The body?" supplied Hanniford. "We moved Mr. Valentine's couch into that empty room across the corridor and laid her in there. Can't imagine what's delaying the wagon," he finished impatiently.

Max sighed, fidgeted, and drummed on the top of the trunk on which he perched. Occasionally he would raise his frightened eyes and stealthily glance through the door at the dark room across the corridor. Doctor Kelly lay back in the easy-chair, silent, motionless, thoughtful. Hanniford sat stiffly erect on the plain, uncomfortable chair, his weary brown eyes fixed unwinkingly on the opposite wall. There was little of the policeman about him, excepting his powerful body. His fine head suggested the student.

Thus they sat in gloomy reverie, waiting for the wagon from the morgue to come for Nicolette Landry's body.

Only the trickle of the water in the lavatory at which Valentine was removing his grease paint disturbed the silence, and when this homely sound ceased the stillness became ghastly, unbearable.

Poor old Slingman buried his face in his hands and groaned.

"Oh, my Gott! Ain't this awful? Poor little Nicolette! Poor Gino! I liked that Gino. You bet I did. See! Just from fooling with the girls comes a murder. Gino was a nice boy, but it's always with him, the women!"

"Yes," drawled Kelly dryly. "Those sort of chaps usually come to grief one way or another. In this case his philandering leads him to the electric chair."

"Don't say it—don't say it," begged Max.

"Do you really think he'll draw the death penalty?" asked Valentine from behind a towel.

"I don't think there is any question about that," answered Kelly, glancing at Hanniford for some sign of confirmation. Hanniford continued to stare at the blank wall and gave no indication that he had heard the remark. Hanniford was a poor talker, but a mighty good listener.

"Circumstantial evidence only, you must remember, doctor," hazarded Valentine.

Now Doctor Kelly had nothing except profound pity for the unfortunate Veladi, but Valentine's suggestion sounded the keynote of an argument, and the doctor could never resist an argument, so he accepted the ventriloquist's tentative rebuttal promptly and forcefully.

"Granted, John. Circumstantial evidence surely, but in this case so devilishly conclusive that no jury would dare render other than a first-degree verdict. The commonwealth's case is powerful. The man was caught almost red-handed. No alibi. No witnesses



The paralyzed watchers heard an agonized gurgle, and then Valentine swung the dummy over his head and sent it crashing through the window.

for his defense. Why, the man is doomed. If he were—for the sake of argument—as innocent as you are, he would still pay the penalty. Only a voice from the dead could save him, and you know such things don't happen. Eh, inspector?"

Hanniford allowed himself the privilege of a fleeting smile.

"I haven't fallen a victim to Madam Ouija as yet, doctor."

"What do you mean, a voice from the dead?" shouted Max, hopping up from the trunk. "A voice from the dead!"

The little man tried to speak in a scoffing manner, but his eyes blinked nervously and he dabbed his moist brow diligently.

"I mean just this, Mr. Slingman," said Kelly. "If Veladi is innocent, which of course he isn't, nothing could save him but the testimony of Nicolette Landry—but this is foolish talk."

"You bet it's foolish talk," grumbled Max, stuffing his handkerchief in his hip pocket. "By golly, it makes goose pimples! Besides already I told you she couldn't even talk it United States

yet. What kind witness would she make?"

Having shown the utter absurdity of Kelly's terrifying suggestion, Max fished out another cheroot and puffed at it a bit more composedly.

Hanniford snatched out his watch and growled:

"What the deuce is holding up that wagon?" He restored the timepiece to his pocket and then said, in rather an absent fashion: "So she couldn't speak English, eh?"

"Not a word," answered Max emphatically. "Why, even to-night when she spoke to Valentine in the wings, she speaks it French so neither of us understood her. Not, John?"

Valentine was readjusting his collar, but at Slingman's question he turned and stared at the old man curiously.

"Spoke to me in the wings?" he repeated slowly.

"Sure. Don't you remember? I kidded you a little about it because just a few minutes before you made that dummy kid me. Sure you remember."

"That's strange," said Valentine, a puzzled frown clouding his face. "You

must be mistaken about that. I don't seem to recall the incident."

"Funny you don't remember, John," Max persisted. "Just before you went on. She caught hold of your arm——"

"Just before I went on I was so infernally upset that I hardly realized anything that was going on around me," reminded Valentine.

"Yes, that's so. You looked awful sick," admitted Slingman. "I forgot about that, John."

Hanniford's tired eyes wandered from Valentine to the dejected Slingman and then back to Valentine. He cleared his throat.

"Did you know this girl, Mr. Valentine?"

"I'm not in the habit of knowing the girls of the chorus," answered Valentine stiffly.

Perhaps Valentine's hauteur ruffled the detective, for his pleasant face hardened very perceptibly.

"I didn't ask you that," he snapped. "I asked you if you knew this girl."

"No—no. Certainly I didn't know her," answered Valentine calmly. "I don't recall seeing her before to-night—that is, to notice her particularly, you understand. I believe I heard Mr. Slingman say she had only been with the show a week. What would be the sense of my denying it, if I did know her?"

"No offense meant," said Hanniford carelessly. "Question just popped in my mind."

"No, I didn't know her," repeated Valentine in a tone of finality.

"The truth, Valentine—the truth!" chattered a raucous voice behind him. "The truth! Tell the truth!"

Max Slingman screamed; a high-pitched, terrible ululation of supreme terror.

"The dummy—the dummy! Look—for Gott's sake—the dummy!"

Doctor Kelly leaped from his chair, and flattened his huge bulk, arms out-

stretched, against the wall. Inspector Hanniford's wooden chair clattered noisily as he kicked it back from under him. Valentine lurched against the dresser. One hand crept to the base of his throat, and he steadied himself with the other as he slowly turned and faced the horror in the corner.

The dummy's arms were swinging widely, crazily. The misproportioned face was twisted into a grin of inhuman malevolence. The thinned lips of the wide mouth were curled back from the clashing teeth and the huge eyes rolled hideously in their sockets.

"The truth, Valentine!" shrieked the dummy. "Tell the truth. You killed her, Valentine! You killed her—I saw you do it, Valentine! You killed——"

Valentine sprawled forward and his clutching hands closed around the dummy's throat. The paralyzed watchers heard an agonized gurgle, and then Valentine swung the dummy up over his head and sent it crashing through the window. The ventriloquist fell against the sill, and the tinkling fragments of glass cut his hands. Horrible convulsions racked his body as he slowly, painfully turned and faced the others. His head was thrown back, his eyes were closed, and his jaws were stretched far apart as though some instrument of torture had been forced into his mouth. For an instant he stood upright, his face black with congesting blood, his fingers tearing at his throat. Then his knees bent, he swayed, and pitched face downward to the floor.

Presently—it seemed like hours, in reality it was but a few seconds—Hanniford shivered and brushed a hand across his eyes. He stepped over the still figure on the floor, carefully raised the wrecked window sash, and vaulted over the sill on to the fire escape. He found himself only one story higher than the areaway level, so he raised the counterbalance that allowed the iron ladder to drop into place, and de-

scended. With the aid of his pocket flash light he located the dummy and, gripping one of its coat sleeves in his teeth, climbed back into the room.

Slingman was lying back in the easy-chair. He looked like a very sick man. He was breathing noisily, his eyes were closed, and his water-soaked clothes bore evidence to summary treatment at the hands of Doctor Kelly.

Kelly had turned the body of Valentine on its back and straightened the limbs. The ventriloquist's classic face was marble-white, composed, peaceful. Kelly knelt at his forehead, and as Hanniford came and stood silently beside him he rose to his feet and drew a long breath.

"Dead?" asked Hanniford, and it was an effort to pronounce the word.

Kelly nodded and walked over to the lavatory.

"What—what do you think—about all this?" asked Hanniford mildly, without raising his eyes from the dead man on the floor.

Kelly washed his hands and dried them before he answered.

"Think?" he repeated harshly. "Think? I think that you and Slingman and I are stark raving crazy. That's what I think."

"I'm almost afraid that's what the jury will think also," said Hanniford, "and Gino Veladi will burn for a crime he didn't commit."

"For Heaven's sake, Hanniford," cried Kelly sarcastically, "you weren't thinking of relating this dope-eater's dream to a jury, were you?"

Hanniford made no reply. He picked up the dummy, held it far out from his body, and contemplated it gravely. Then he gingerly laid it on the trunk, and shook his grizzled head impatiently.

"The witness for the defense!" he muttered. "Great suffering and holy cats!"

Slingman stirred uneasily in his chair.

"A voice from the dead," he whimpered. "A voice from the dead!"

"There is only one answer to it," declared Doctor Kelly testily. "And unless I find a similar case in these reference books, it will be a mighty important contribution to the annals of medicine."

Max Slingman sipped at his whisky, somberly puffed at his cheroot, and said nothing. Doctor Kelly impatiently threw the heavy volume he had been thumbing to the floor and picked up another one. Ever since they had entered Doctor Kelly's luxurious library two hours previous they had been occupied thus: Slingman vainly trying to quiet his jangling nerves with the doctor's excellent Scotch, and Kelly vainly attempting to locate some authoritative report on insanity and nervous diseases which would bear out the theory he had formed—the only theory which could possibly explain the fear-some thing they had witnessed in Valentine's dressing room.

"This is Séglas on insanity," he told the unhappy Max, "and I consider him the last word. If what I'm looking for isn't here, then I will have the privilege of recording a most remarkable case of combined criminal insanity and aphasia. You know what aphasia is, Max?"

"Sure," answered Max, whose uncouth English was no indication of his learned, well-stocked mind. "Aphasia is when you get all mixed up in your own talk. A knock on the head does it. Not?"

"Yes. It's a lesion which destroys one of the language centers of the brain. Consequently the nerve fibers transmit the wrong message and the vocal apparatus utters the wrong sounds. There's no use going into all the various phases of aphasia, but I'll

quote a few cases which will enable you to understand my theory more fully. I'll explain as simply as possible. A victim of aphasia will attempt to speak his thoughts. He knows what he wants to say, but his disordered mechanism of speech sends forth words which are either utterly irrelevant or else words which convey a totally opposite meaning to that which he intended. Another case, and this is one I know of personally: a friend of mine, a wealthy, able man, absolutely sane, automatically and unconsciously utters any unusual or sudden noise he hears, like the neighing of a horse, the barking of a dog, or the honk of a motor car's horn.

"Doctor Michaels told me some years ago of a female patient he had under his care at St. Elizabeth's, who spoke her inmost thoughts——"

"Yeh! Lot's of women's like that," interrupted Max sourly, "and they ain't all in the bughouse, either."

"Of course these are unusual cases," went on Kelly, unheeding, "but if there have been cases as extreme as these I mention, then credence must be given to the theory I am about to advance."

"And what's your theory? That the dummy had aphasia?" sneered Max, still in sarcastic mood.

Doctor Kelly smiled at Slingman's absurdity.

"No. Valentine. You know he saw active service in the war and was wounded several times. It's altogether possible, and the more I think of it the more convinced I am that I'm right. He killed the girl, for what reasons we do not know yet. He was laboring under a terrific strain. Under Hanniford's insistent questioning, he lost control of his faculties, and the injured speech center caused him to blurt out the very thing he was trying his best to conceal."

"Rot!" shouted Max rudely. "He

didn't say a word! The dummy did it!"

"I think I can explain that also," stated Kelly, nodding his head confidently, "and, by the heavens, it's just about what would happen under the circumstances. What is more natural, assuming Valentine's vocal apparatus to be deranged, than for him to use the secondary voice, the voice that speaks without the aid of his lips—in other words, Eddie's voice?"

Slingman snapped his chubby fingers excitedly.

"Why you try to make me believe such silly things? I hear what I hear! I see what I see! You tell me that Valentine stand by the dresser and put words in the dummy's mouth six or maybe eight feet away? Then tell me *what made the dummy go so?*" And Slingman imitated the workings of the dummy's face and the jerky, unnatural sawing of its arms.

Doctor Kelly shaded his eyes with his hand and sighed heavily.

"Oh, damn it, I don't know!" he muttered irritably. "Did the dummy actually move? Perhaps we only imagined it did. I refuse to believe I saw any such preposterous thing. I prefer to believe that just as the movements of the dummy's face during Valentine's act strengthened the illusion of the voices emanating from the dummy, so the sound of Eddie's voice deluded us into believing we saw the accompanying grimaces of his face. The thing's absurd. And that's what worries me. How are we going to save Veladi? How is our story going to be received by the press and the public? I'll tell you their answer is one word: Collusion. Collusion between you and me—and Hanniford."

"Hanniford!" repeated Slingman, his thoughts jumping in another direction. "By golly, doc, why d'ye suppose he remains in that—that Gott-forsaken theater after everybody left?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. I've always been rather vain because I possessed a little more than the average doctor's share of nerve, but I was honestly glad when he turned down my offer to stay with him. He's a queer fish and must have a chilled-steel courage. My opinion is that, like myself, he has the skeptic's aversion to being confronted by anything that smacks of the supernatural, and with the patience and stubbornness of his class, he intends to remain on the scene, hoping to unearth some natural and normal answer to the things we have witnessed. I am inclined to think he will fail dismally."

"Supernatural!" said Max in sepulchral tones. "Supernatural! Just like a voice from the dead."

Now it was the doctor's turn to cry stuff and nonsense.

"Listen to me, doc," said Max didactically. "You ever read about the feller Frankenstein, hey? Maybe also about that Doctor Jekyll? You remember how Frankenstein fool with the monster he made, and how Doctor Jekyll made monkey business with Mr. Hyde? You remember what happened to them two fresh guys?"

"Pshaw!" snorted Doctor Kelly. "What's that got to do with the case?"

"Just this," said Max in all seriousness. "Valentine taught that dummy to talk. Maybe also he taught him to think. Anyhow the dummy saw him kill the girl, and squealed on him."

Kelly attempted a sneer at Slingman's gruesome conceit, but it was rather a sickly sneer, for the old fellow had expressed in his crude way the very thought which had terrified Kelly's brain hours before in the dead-man's dressing room.

The silence which followed Slingman's remark was broken by the sharp, imperative ringing of the entrance bell in the front of the apartment. Doctor Kelly leaped to his feet and went

swiftly through the corridor. Slingman fidgeted uneasily on the edge of his chair.

The doctor reappeared at the library door, and with him was Inspector Hanniford.

"Now what?" demanded Max shrilly. "Who's dead this time?"

Doctor Kelly threw Max an admonishing glance and pulled up a comfortable chair for Hanniford, but the policeman shook his head vigorously.

"Thanks just the same, doctor, but it's growing late, or early rather, and I must turn in. Just dropped in to see you on the off chance that you would still be up, and to tell you a few things that may ease your minds. Don't mind admitting that the little scene we experienced together threw me off my legs for a while. That's the reason I stuck around the theater. Yes, thanks, I will have a smoke."

The policeman lighted the cigar Kelly offered, and puffed at it appreciatively for a while. Then in his clipped, forceful style he continued his talk:

"After everybody cleared out of the theater I settled myself in Valentine's room and tried to puzzle the thing out. Had two theories, one of which I discarded early, because it admitted the supernatural. Don't believe in the supernatural. The other theory stumped me because I wasn't enough of a medico to plug up the holes in it and polish it up."

"Aphasia!" shouted Kelly triumphantly.

"Something like that. Well, as I sat there worrying it over in my mind, I began to feel queer. Can't just express the sensation, never much good at talking. Anyhow I got the idea in my head that I wasn't alone, that somebody or something was in that room with me and I couldn't see it. Damned unpleasant sensation, I'll say. Think I got panicky for a moment. I was

slowly feeling for my gun, when I heard a moan. The sound came from directly in front of me. Forgot to tell you I was sitting in the easy-chair and facing the wardrobe. You can believe me when I tell you I went sick when I noticed the heavy curtains that form the wardrobe tremble and draw apart. I got my gun out just as a man tumbled out of the wardrobe and fell at my feet—insensible."

Doctor Kelly grunted loudly and dropped into a handy chair. Slingman merely squinted stupidly at the detective. He was past reacting to any shocks.

"The man was Saunders," went on Hanniford briskly. "The poor old chap was in a bad way. The experiences of the night and his long stretch in that stuffy wardrobe had about done for him. I dosed him with the remains of the brandy and water, and finally brought him around to a point where he could talk something like rationally. I succeeded in getting enough information out of him to reconstruct the whole affair, although there are a few points that will never be completely cleared up, for both the principals are dead.

"What we don't know isn't really material. We do know that Valentine married Nicolette Landry in Marseilles, that he came back to America without her, that he posed as a single man, and that her appearance in New York two weeks before his marriage to Miss Swint was highly inopportune.

"I don't know whether to classify Valentine as a great villain or merely a great fool. Saunders says his late master was a most difficult man—very reserved and unapproachable. He says, however, that it was a great shock to Valentine when he discovered that the girl was in New York and a member of the same company. She attempted to get Saunders, who speaks fluent French, to act as an intercessor, but

being a rather cowardly old fellow, as you will see presently, he was afraid to broach the subject to his master.

"Now to take up the events of last night. What she said to Valentine in the wings or why she crept to his dressing room during the finale are two of the things we will never know, but it is reasonable to assume that she was desperately pleading for recognition. What was in the man's mind God only knows, but I don't think he intended to kill her. I think—and so does Saunders—that the fates conspired to make a murderer out of Valentine. And I'll tell you why.

"Do you remember, Mr. Slingman, when Veladi bumped into Valentine and knocked the dummy out of his arms? I see you do. Well, as the Italian stooped to pick the dummy up, Saunders saw something you did not. He saw Valentine swiftly and dexterously pluck the Italian's knife from its scabbard. And so when Valentine ordered Saunders to go out and buy him some medicine, instead of Saunders getting his hat from the dressing room and leaving the theater, for once in his life he disobeyed instructions and remained in the room. He was worried frantic. He was sure his master contemplated suicide and he didn't know just how to circumvent him.

"Valentine's footsteps in the corridor further confused him. He was afraid of a reprimand, and the horrible thought suggested itself that maybe Valentine was insane and would attack him. So he hid in the wardrobe. Silly, eh? Well, so are most human impulses. Saunders says that Valentine entered the room, put the dummy on one of the plain chairs, and pushed the chair directly in front of the wardrobe, where it would be out of the way. Do you begin to see?

"Valentine then stood in the center of the room, staring blankly at the

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floor, his hands opening and closing nervously.

"Saunders was having a pretty bad time of it in the wardrobe, watching all this through a tiny crack in the curtains. Valentine took the knife from his pocket and held it out and away from his body, but with the point turned toward him. Saunders says that if Valentine had stabbed himself then and there he couldn't have moved a muscle to prevent it. He was petrified.

"Before Valentine could drive the knife home there came a tap on the door. And right here Valentine did a strange thing, a thing that proves at this moment the murderous thought was born in his brain. He snapped off the electric lights! He evidently knew or suspected who his visitor was. He slowly opened the door. As you know, the corridor lights were also extinguished, and for a moment Saunders couldn't see a thing.

"But he heard Nicolette Landry's soft tones and Valentine's murmured replies. And then, by the light of that areaway arc that filters through the window, he saw Valentine put his left arm around the girl's waist, swing her up close to him, and drive the knife into her bosom. He lowered the body to the floor noiselessly, stepped back into the room, shut the door carefully, and lay down on the couch.

"Saunders next heard running feet in the corridor—that was Gino. Then he heard Miss Tracey scream. At that, Valentine arose, snapped on the lights, and opened the door. The rest you know."

Hanniford touched a match to his cigar, which had gone dead, and made a motion with his hat as of farewell.

"Guess I'll be trotting along. Must go down to the stone house and get that boy Gino out into the free air again.

"That's one bright spot in an otherwise nasty night. Understand, I don't

take any particular credit for solving this case. All laurels go to the dummy, or, rather, to Saunders and the dummy, though I'll admit the old boy's damned-fool dramatics scared me worse than I ever thought I could be scared in this world."

"It was Saunders who manipulated the dummy, eh?" mused Doctor Kelly absently.

"Yes. You see, poor old Saunders was in a devil of a dilemma. He never dreamed that Gino would be arrested for the crime, and he was too frightened to step out from his place of concealment and boldly accuse Valentine. He was also afraid that he himself would be implicated. So he stuck dumbly to his hiding place. He was aghast at the thought that Gino would pay the death penalty. He had no special affection for his master, but on the other hand he was very fond—like most everybody else around the theater—of the irrepressible Gino. So when I was questioning Valentine, the old man's childish mind—and probably his inherent dramatic instinct had something to do with it also—suggested the trick that so thoroughly upset us all and shocked Valentine to death. Saunders, of course, had no idea of the awful scene he was about to precipitate. His one idea was to throw a fright into Valentine that would break him down and force a confession. So he reached his hand through the curtains and inserted it in the slot in the dummy's back, manipulated the wires that controlled the dummy's limbs and features, and screamed out the accusation he dared not make openly. Can you imagine the effect on Valentine's crazed brain? God! It must have been awful. The man paid for his sins in that one moment.

"Well, I guess I'd better be getting down to the Tombs before our excitable songbird takes a notion to hang

himself to his cell bars. I'll say good morning, gentlemen."

"I think I'll go with you," said Slingman, bouncing up from the depths of his chair. The fat little manager was once more his sane, debonair self. He laid a hand on Hanniford's arm.

"Believe me, Hanniford, I won't forget this. Pretty near, Doc Kelly and me make fools of ourselves. Not, doctor?"

Doctor Kelly's eyes twinkled for the first time in many hours.

"Aphasia!" snorted Max in disgust. "Shoosh!"

"Frankenstein!" retorted Kelly promptly. "A voice from the dead!"

"S'nough!" laughed Slingman. "Call it a draw. So long, doc."

He extended his pudgy hand, and as Kelly gripped it the little man's eyes strayed to a massively framed portrait of Pauline Swint which stood on the wide mantel above the fireplace.

"There are dummies that talk, and also there are dummies that don't talk—soon enough," stated Slingman significantly.

Doctor Kelly must have understood this cryptic remark, for he colored furiously and glanced slyly at the picture. He exerted an added pressure on Slingman's fingers and hope renewed shone in his steady eyes.



VILLANELLE OF THE SAD POET

HE who has held so many springs in fief
Is lonely under this November sky.
Autumn has crept upon him like a thief.

He mourns the flower falling, and the leaf,
And all old pomps that march away to die:
He who has held so many springs in fief.

He grieves the clover withered, and the sheaf,
The rusted vineyards and the streams run dry.
Autumn has crept upon him like a thief.

He had forgotten spring could be so brief
And dusk so sad when early snows drift by:
He who has held so many springs in fief.

He is a valiant and defeated chief,
Whose band went southward as the swallows fly.
Autumn has crept upon him like a thief.

Poets and maids, remember in his grief
Your brother Pan, whose world is all awry.
He who has held so many springs in fief,
Autumn has crept upon him like a thief.

WALTER ADOLPHE ROBERTS.



New York Stage Successes

"Little Old New York"

By Rida Johnson Young

Author of "Brown of Harvard," "Cap'n Kidd, Jr.," "Maytime" etc.

WHEN Little Old New York was young—somewhere around the year 1810—is the fascinating background which Rida Johnson Young has chosen for her newest comedy. Those were the days when gay parties went blackberrying in Maiden Lane, when carriages drove up and down the tree-lined Broadway, when Boston could be reached in a six-day journey by coach, and Albany was only thirty hours away. It was then that poor young Cornelius Vanderbilt, his mind filled with steamboats and transportation problems, was beginning to operate his ferry between Staten Island and the Battery, and the conservative John Jacob Astor was being jeered at for putting all his money into real estate.

Young Peter Delmonico was just starting his business, selling sandwiches and oysters at his "cook shop" and at various entertainments. Henry Brevoort, Washington Irving, Fitz Green Halleck, and Larry Delevan—the latter of an inventive turn of mind—were lively young bloods, excusing their all-night carousing, their prize fights, and cockfights on the ground that the city had reached the limit of its possible development and that opportunity was dead.

After an all-night celebration at the home of Larry Delevan, during which Brevoort has won all the cards, the young men, at the suggestion of Larry's man, Reilly, rush out to the horse

trough for a morning douse under the pump. Larry springs up at the sound of the knocker on the front door.

LARRY: Good Lord! I'll wager that's Astor—he's always up at cock crow.

REILLY: It's that ferryman. The devil on him! Trying to make a mechanic of you! (*At the door*) Will you come this way, sir? (*CORNELIUS VANDERBILT enters.*)

LARRY: Well! Well! Good morning, Cornelius.

VANDERBILT: Good morning, Mr. Delevan. I trust I'm not too early for you.

LARRY: Not at all. I've been up for hours. Sit down. I suppose it's about the engine?

VANDERBILT: Yes, sir. I've come to tell you that I've interested Brown & Company in your drawings. They like the plans and feel sure that you can improve on Fulton's patents. But you know we've got to have models before we can get a patent, and they won't talk business until then.

LARRY: See here, Cornelius. We won't have to depend on Brown & Company to build that ship. Remember my telling you that my stepfather left his entire fortune to a nephew in Ireland, with the condition that if he wasn't found within a year it was to revert to me? Well, the year is up to-day, and they haven't found the lad.

VANDERBILT: I congratulate you.

LARRY: Thanks. You know, you're the first man who ever made me feel that I had something in me besides the instinct for gambling. I'm going to tie to you, Cornelius, and we'll build that steamship ourselves.

VANDERBILT: Splendid, sir! (*LARRY's all-night guests reënter noisily, and are presented to VANDERBILT.*)

LARRY: This is Mr. Washington Irving, Cornelius. He scribbles a bit. Awful stuff, but the public has a strange taste for it.

VANDERBILT: I'm honored. I've heard of Mr. Irving.

By Courtesy of the Author and of Sam H. Harris, Producer



Henry Brevoort
(John Ward)

Larry DeLeon
(Ernest Glendinning)

Fitz Green Halleck
(John Randall)

Washington Irving
(Frank Charlton)

LARRY: Oh, believe me, you'll have to do better than that——

IRVING: The honor is mine, I'm sure. I've heard of you, too, Mr. Vanderbilt. You sail the ferryboat to Staten Island, don't you? Ever have any passengers?

VANDERBILT: Eight or nine every trip.

LARRY: This disreputable person, Cornelius, is Mr. Fitz Green Halleck, secretary to Mr. John Jacob Astor in his leisure moments.

HALLECK: Is that so! Don't you believe

him, Vanderbilt. I'm the only one of the lot who really works.

LARRY: And this is Mr. Brevoort, who lives like a prince on the coin we lose to him.

BREVOORT: The coin you lose, you mean. The I O U's you write. And a good wait I have for them!

LARRY: Here! Don't ruin my credit with Vanderbilt. We're going into business together. (*All laugh heartily.*) Let 'em scoff, Cornelius. But just wait until they come

and beg a ride on our fine new steamboat. That engine idea of mine that you've all laughed at, and prevented my working on, is practical! Vanderbilt knows all about engines. He believes in it, Brown & Company believe in it, and we're going to build a steamboat!

IRVING: Oh, good Lord, Larry! You don't mean that seriously? Sailing around in a tea kettle! It'll never be done.

VANDERBILT: The steamer *Clermont* made Albany in thirty hours, sir.

BREVOORT: They'll never do it again. It was an accident. My opinion is they just drifted there.

LARRY: What—against the current?

HALLECK: Oh, nonsense! They did it all right, but steamboats are only toys. They'll never be practical!

IRVING: I don't like the idea. Where's all the romance of the seas, with sails given the go-by?

VANDERBILT: I think, Mr. Irving, that romance will have to yield to progress.

HALLECK: I wouldn't trust myself in one of them. Didn't the engine burst on the second trip? It's too damn' dangerous.

VANDERBILT: Oh, but Mr. Delevan's engine has improvements. A safety valve that— (REILLY ushers in MR. JOHN JACOB ASTOR.)

ASTOR: Good morning, gentlemen. (*Looking around the disordered room*) H'm! Another all-night gaming party! Young gentlemen, I haf no authority over you, but to conduct myself as you do, I would be ashamed!

IRVING: Oh, come now, Mr. Astor. In your young days surely you had an occasional night of jollity.

ASTOR: I had not. I came to dis country with one suit of clothes, seven flutes from my brother's music store in London, and five pounds sterling. Dat is all. I haf peddled skins. I haf peddled cakes for de baker. I haf not arrived vere I am to-day by "nights of jollity," as you call dem.

BREVOORT: There was more opportunity for young men then, sir. There is no such spur to ambition at present. This town has reached its limits. One can't begin small and grow big now, sir.

ASTOR: If you would keep your eyes shut by night and open by day, you would see opportunities—yes, plenty opportunities.

LARRY: Well, I for one, Mr. Astor, am going to keep my eyes open. I've a splendid use for the money I come into to-day.

ASTOR (*with hesitation*): Larry, as de trustee of your step-father's estate—I am sorry, but I haf bad news for you. Dis is not a pleasant task, lad, to haf to bring



Douglas J. Wood as Cornelius Vanderbilt

you disappointment, but—dey have found de young lad, your cousin.

LARRY: Found him? Egad! This is a facer. Are you sure, sir?

ASTOR: I had dispatches from the Liverpool packet, vere she was anchored last night. I fear dere is no mistake. Young O'Day and his father are on dat ship. He vill be here to-day—in fact, within the hour. You may read de dispatches de harbor runner brought me.

LARRY (*handing papers back*): No wonder they were so long finding them, sir! On that wild coast in the north of Ireland.

ASTOR: Yes, dere is no dispatch service within miles of dem, de lawyer says. Dey were living in extreme poverty, he says.

LARRY: Well, I'm glad de boy's found for his sake, but—this puts a little crimp in our steamboat scheme, Cornelius.

VANDERBILT: It needn't, sir, with your ability.

ASTOR: You vill haf one hundred a month as de boy's guardian. De conditions were dat he was to live with you. Your stepfather was no fool, Larry. He thought de responsibility of de child would be good for you.

LARRY: It's a damned nuisance. Oh, Lord, I'll be expected to set him a good example!

ASTOR (*rising*): Try and do so. I vill see him first and examine de papers. (*After Astor's departure the others crowd sympathetically about LARRY.*)

BREVOORT: Well, of all hard luck! How the devil did your stepfather come to leave his money to that brat in Ireland?

LARRY: It was one of those conscience things. It seems my stepfather had rather neglected his brother, whom he'd promised to help—and this boy was named after him and— Oh, well, he had no reason to think well of me. But what's the odds! I've managed to have a good time on nothing a year. I'll do it again!

VANDERBILT: Maybe it's a good thing, Mr. Delevan. You'll have to work now. Don't take it too much to heart. You mark my words—we'll have that line of steamships running yet! (*Exits.*)

BREVOORT: Come, Larry, forget your troubles. Let's make a day of it. What do you say to going over to the Pleasure Gardens at Hoboken? There's a cockfight on.

LARRY: Oh, I don't care; but I think I should stay here if the boy is coming.

BREVOORT: Stay here and welcome the brat who's going to get your money?

LARRY: It isn't his fault, and it isn't my money. I was a fool to count on it. It was

a gambler's chance, but you know I'm a born gambler, and I can still grin when I turn up a deuce.

Two unusual callers, whom Bunny, a night watchman, is attempting to chase off the Delevan premises, seek an interview with Larry. They are the picturesque "Bully Boy" Brewster, who introduces himself as "Head of the Fighting Fire Laddies, Champion Fighter of the Butcher Hillers, first to a fight or a fire—Bully Boy Brewster, that's me," and his masterful sister Rachel. They have come to solicit Larry Delevan's backing of Bully Boy.

LARRY: Oh, I see. It's all right, Bunny. This man was sent me by Halleck. So you want to get into the ring, my man?

BREWSTER: Do I? Always ready for a fight or a fire. Sleeps in me shirt, I do.

LARRY: What do you think, Brevoort? Halleck wants me to take him up. They're looking for a man to go against the "Hoboken Terror."

BREWSTER: I'm your man, mister.

RACHEL: Yes. Only needs a gentleman backer to lick the hell out of anybody in his class.

LARRY: Little light, I think.

IRVING: I say, Larry, how about no more prize fighting?

LARRY: Lord! I've got to live!

BREVOORT (*to BREWSTER*): You're the fellow that Congreve put up against "Fighting Bill" Marsh, aren't you?

BREWSTER: Oh, what I done to Fightin' Bill!

LARRY: Bill Marsh was practically dead before you took him on.

RACHEL: Oh, no, he wasn't! Not by no manner of means. He battered Bully Boy something terrible before he knocked him out.

LARRY: Well, if Marsh gave him such a fight, I can't see—

RACHEL: He's a better man now. He's getting better every day. I raised him from a pup, and I know.

BREWSTER: Bully Boy Brewster meets all comers. Give me a chance, gent, and I'll show you.

LARRY: Well, I'll have my trainer look you over, and if he thinks you're good enough to take up, it's a go.

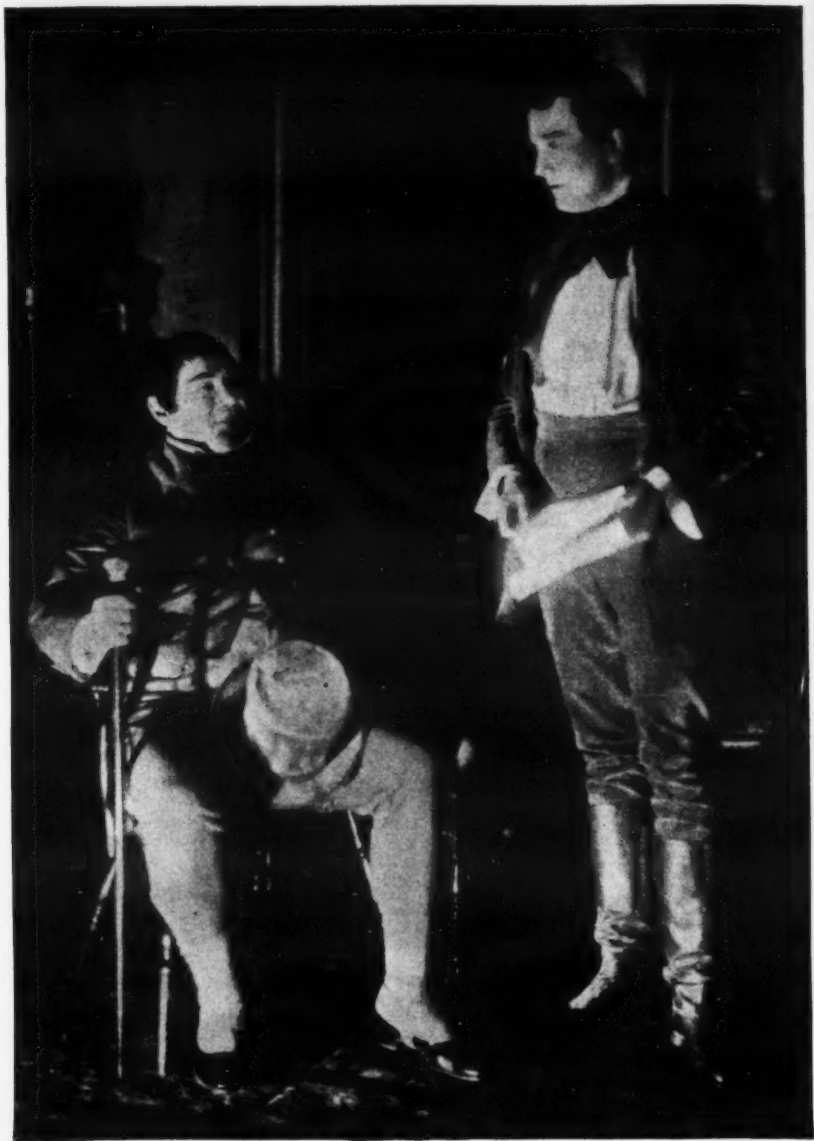
RACHEL: He don't need no trainer. I'm his trainer. You ought to see how he knocks the wind out of me. Come on, Boy, show 'em what you got. (*Squares off for a fight.*)



Genevieve Tobin, the winsome, adorable *Pat*.

BUNNY: Here! Here! You can't go on like this. I'll arrest you! I'm the night watchman, I am.

RACHEL: Well, it's daytime now. You go to sleep, or I'll put you! (*Makes a rush toward BUNNY.*)



John Jacob Astor (Albert Andrus)

Cornelius Vanderbilt (Douglas J. Wood)

VANDERBILT: Pardon me, Mr. Astor, but you see progress only in one way.

But before Bunny can reply to this outrageous insult to his dignity, Larry's cousin, Betty Schuyler, comes running in, and the Brewsters and Bunny are hurried off. Betty brings with her Ariana de Puyster, formerly a "meek and modest maiden," beloved by Larry, but just now returned on the Liverpool packet from a year's sojourn in cultured London. She is to stay with Betty for a few days to break the journey to her home in Haarlem Village.

ARIANA: I protest, Betty! This seems monstrous indelicate. (*Coquettishly*) I vow, gentlemen, I'm covered with confusion. Betty has dragged me from the coach and across the lawn as though Larry Delevan's house were afire.

IRVING: Perhaps 'tis the fire in his heart which only you can assuage.

ARIANA: Oh, la, Mr. Irving! Such a pretty speech! I vow you're wasting your time in this barbarous country. You should bring your ready wit to London, where there is cultchah. (*LARRY stands on the stairs, looking at ARIANA in amazement.*)

IRVING: Had you given me the hint before you returned, I might have been tempted.

ARIANA: I vow—a neat speech for an American! Lord Chesterfield could do no better.

BREVOORT (*coming forward*): Have you quite forgotten me?

ARIANA: Oh! Young Brevoort, isn't it? And how is your good father and the little farm?

BREVOORT: Both prospering, thank you.

BETTY: Mercy me, Ariana! Mr. Brevoort's father is one of the richest and most influential men in our town.

ARIANA (*with gushing affection*): That's gratifying—very. I mustn't forget that this is a democratic country—filthy lucre stamps the class. It is so different in London. There it is all family and cultchah—cultchah—cultchah. I adore cultchah! On my word, Larry! I surmised I'd find you hanging over the end of the pier to greet me.

LARRY: I—well—you didn't let us know—that is—I'm very glad to welcome you home, Mistress de Puyster. (*Kisses her hand.*)

ARIANA: Oh! Chick-a-dee-dee! "Mistress de Puyster!" No formality with me, I pray. Not from you.

BETTY: Mercy me, Ariana, how you do go on!

ARIANA: I'm all of a twitter, child. Covered with confusion, I assure you. Really we must go now. Two girls calling upon a bachelor—my dear! Come, Betty. *Adieu, gentlemen—au revoir—arivaderchi!* You see I learned them all over there. (*She drags BETTY off. The young men burst into hilarious laughter.*)

IRVING: Oh, Lord! "*Au revoir—chick-a-dee-dee—arivaderchi*"—ha, ha!

BREVOORT: "Cultchah—cultchah"—she adores "cultchah!" (*Roars with laughter.*)

IRVING: You'll have to excuse my mirth, Larry, but I never saw such a change in a person in my life.

BREVOORT: She's not the same girl at all.

LARRY: Well, this has been a great day for me!

A little later, Astor returns with the newly arrived O'Days—the old man feeble and spent, and young Pat anxiously attending him. Larry greets them kindly.

O'DAY (*sinking into a chair*): Oh, Pat! The strength of me is water.

PAT: 'Tis only a drop of heartenin' ye need. (*Turning to ASTOR*) Old gentleman, have ye the likes of a bottle in your pocket?

ASTOR: I haf not.

PAT: Oh, 'twas the look of your nose made me think it.

LARRY (*after ordering REILLY to bring some brandy*): Be more respectful, boy. This is Mr. Astor.

PAT: Mr. Astor or the King of America, 'tis all one to me, and me father shakin' like a piece of wet paper. (*To ASTOR*) You'll excuse me, sir, but ye can see me father's fair spent with all that ride up in your grand coach.

O'DAY: Oh, Pat, I'll never live over it! (*Fretfully*) I won't be livin' with the Dilevans! I hate them. (*Tries to rise.*)

PAT: Rest yourself, dad. You can hate them just as much sittin'. You see, me father wanted to go to a tavern, but this old gentleman would have none of it.

ASTOR: Delevan is your guardian. De conditions of de vill vere dat you are to live with him.

O'DAY: I don't want to live with the Dilevans!

PAT: It's tired he is and hungry, too. And meself the like. I'm that hungry I couldn't cast a shadow. (*LARRY goes to order food, and ASTOR takes his departure.*)

ASTOR (*at the door*): Allow me to advise, sir, a little courtesy. Your nephew loses a very large fortune by your coming here. Make it as easy as you can. I'll see

you again when you are rested from your journey. (*Exits.*)

PAT (*running to her father*): Oh, dad, let's run for it! It's not too late. Let's be sayin' it was all a joke. I can't go on with it.

O'DAY: Patricia, girl, you'll not back down on me now?

PAT: That old Dutchman, with his keen eyes, 'll be knowin' I'm not a boy the second time he first lays eyes on me.

O'DAY: Have ye forgotten your promise, me girl? Have ye forgotten the black, bitter poverty we've seen together? Have ye forgotten your brother, who died for want of a crust?

PAT: The young Delevan looks kind. Maybe he'll help us if we tell him the truth—that me brother is dead and all.

O'DAY: Help? After us deceiving the lawyer man? Haven't we spent the money he gave us? It's clapping us in jail, he would be! I know the Dilevans, and the Dilevan woman, his mother, settin' her own brother against me, so's he wouldn't lift hand nor foot to help us! Ye've made me an oath to take the place of your dead brother, and me curse'll follow ye if ye go back on it.

PAT (*distressed*): Don't say that, dad. I'll do as ye say. Oh, why didn't me uncle lave the money to me instead of me poor brother!

O'DAY: The money is ours, be rights. Didn't I lend me brother five pounds to come to this country to make his fortune? It's only three years ye'll have to play the boy, lass. Then ye'll come into your fortune and sail away back to Ireland and queen it with the best. That's me brave lass! Kape a bold front.

PAT: And haven't I been keepin' a hold front! But the back of me's tremblin'.

* O'Day put to bed, Larry detains Pat for a moment.

LARRY: If there is anything you want, speak to Reilly about it.

PAT: Speak to *him*, is it? Sure, I could do with a little bit of welcome from me only relation in America.

LARRY: You're expecting rather a good deal under the circumstances, aren't you? But I don't suppose it's any more pleasant for you than for me.

PAT: It's not. If we'd have known we had to live with you, we wouldn't have come.

LARRY: Well, you won't be troubled much with me. I'm out all night, and sleep all day, usually.

PAT: That's a pretty bad way to live.

LARRY: Well, it's my way. It's ridiculous, my being your guardian! This house

is run like a ballyhoo fair. My friends are noisy and boisterous. I have only one servant. It's going to be damned uncomfortable for the lot of us, but such as it is, you're welcome. I'm going to live up to the conditions of my stepfather's will, but I'm not going to pretend I like it. Come, lad, don't look so down. I don't mean to be unkind, but I've had the devil of a day. You just make yourself at home. I'll be back in a couple of days—I'm going on a spree. One grand, glorious spree. I have things to forget, and I'm going to forget them!

PAT: If you're me guardian, you ought to be settin' me a good example and not goin' off on a spree! I wish I hadn't come. I wish I were back home!

LARRY: Holy Moses! He's going to bawl! Get him some toys, Reilly, or something. What do you do with children, anyhow, Reilly?

PAT (*indignantly*): I'm not a child! I'm a grown—boy. Haven't you eyes in your head—you big—big lummoxy?

REILLY: If he was mine, I'd spank him and let him know at once who's master.

PAT: Master, is it? There's no one going to be my master. I don't want to live here any more than you want me, but I was tryin' to be friendlylike, but you won't have it. Very well. It's cats and dogs we'll be.

LARRY: See here, young man, I'm not in a very good mood.

PAT: Oh, ye surprise me! I thought it was the natural manner of the Delevans.

LARRY: And I have a temper—

PAT: I can match you there! I'm holdin' mine like a pair of wild horses this minute! I'm gettin' the treatment I looked for from the Delevans, though I didn't expect it!

LARRY: Come now, lad, why should you hate the Delevans?

PAT: Didn't your mother set his own brother against me father?

LARRY: Well, it's true—she intercepted his begging letters—

PAT: Begging letters, is it? Have a care to your tongue! Me father was askin' for his rights. Didn't me uncle promise to share with dad, and didn't the Delevan woman keep him out of it?

LARRY: Don't call my mother the Delevan woman!

PAT: I will! The Delevan woman! The Delevan woman! To hell with the Delevans! (*As she starts to run upstairs, LARRY catches her by the arm.*)

LARRY: See here, boy, I'm getting a hundred dollars a month to raise you properly, and I'm going to earn it! Fetch my slipper, Reilly. We're going to start in right.

(Drags her toward chair as curtain falls.)

Three months later a sad little Pat, dressed in a new suit of black, sits in the Delevan garden, playing on an Irish harp. At intervals she stops to weave flowers into a wreath for her father's grave and to reply to the remarks of Reilly, who is cleaning pipes near by.

REILLY: Fiddle, fiddle—dingie, dangle—all day long! Have you naught else to do?

PAT: Yes, I'm trying to mind my own business. Others might do the same.

REILLY: 'Twas a sad day when Mister Larry gave you his mother's harp. To see a boy pickin' and mincin' over it all day is enough to make a donkey laugh.

PAT: Go on and laugh then. I don't care.

REILLY: Better you'd run about and get some life into you. You'll not be bringin' your father back by mopin'. 'Tisn't fittin', a lad to be molly-meanderin' around with a girl's occupations!

PAT: Fine you know what's fittin'. What time was Larry Delevan goin' to bed last night?

REILLY: 'Twas along in the little hours.

PAT: And him promisin' to give up his card parties!

REILLY: He didn't touch a card, the poor lad, and hasn't since this day fortnight. And all your fault! It's his promise he made you, though what the poor lad will be doin' for a decent livin' without the cards, I don't know. With you here robbin' him of his rightful money and all! (PAT gulps and wipes her eyes.) Hey! Old Reilly didn't mean to hurt your feelings. There's no call to go greetin' like a girl on a careless word.

PAT: I'm not cryin'. 'Twas the sun in me eyes. (After a silence) Reilly, what



Pat attempts to lure Larry away from Ariana de Puyster.

would they be doin' to cheats in this country? Rogues, cheats—those that defraud others from their money.

REILLY: The watch-house for them! And maybe the stocks for the whole town to throw mud at. It might be if he stole much, they'd hang him as high as Haman!

PAT: But suppose he—she—was a girl?

REILLY: Go 'long with you! No girl would be doin' it.

PAT: But if she was a young girl, who didn't know rightly what she was doin'?

REILLY: Well, I'm thinkin' they'd duck her in Stuyvesant Pond. Maybe they'd hang her the same. A rogue's a rogue and a thief's a thief, young or old.



Brevort

"The H-boken Terror"

Hallick

Bully Boy Brewster

Washington Irving

HALLECK: Are we ready? Let your principals toe the line!

It is almost noon when Larry, just out of bed and in high good humor, enters. Pat gently reproaches him for his late hours and his gambling propensities. But Larry, it is true, hasn't touched a card in a fortnight, is "re-forming damnably," and on the next day is to begin work in De Puyster's banking house.

PAT: H'm! It's easy seein' why you chose De Puyster's, with that fall-lall-in', dew-dabbin' Ariana makin' eyes at you till it's fair sickenin'. I suppose when you get important you'll maybe be proposin' for her.

LARRY: Ariana has higher ideas than poor me. She'd refuse me. Ha! Ha! Pat, you're for all the world like a girl! I believe you're jealous.

PAT: And why should I be jealous of you and your Ariana with her "cultchah?"

LARRY (his arm about her shoulder): Because you like me, Pat. You can't deny it! Come now, lad, will you swear that I haven't a place in your funny little heart?

PAT: If you only had more sense!

LARRY: I'm as God made me.

PAT: You're not. God didn't make you a gambler and a waster.

LARRY: Now, see here, don't start that again. You're worse than a woman—nagging all the time. Haven't I said I'm going to work? Haven't I promised not to gamble?

PAT: If you marry Ariana de Puyster, it'll be the worst gamble you ever took. (Pauses to examine critically LARRY's breakfast, which REILLY brings out.) Look to the soiled napkin—and the chocolate's all spilled on the cloth!

LARRY: Never mind! Never mind! For the Lord's sake, Pat, leave my breakfast alone! You're a molly-coddle. I won't have you fussing about the house! I told you so when I caught you dusting my desk.

REILLY: Sure, sir, I'm ashamed of Ireland sendin' out a lad so finikin'. He sews the buttons on his drawers. I saw him.

LARRY: Disgusting! I won't have you molly-meandering about the house. You're going to grow up into a terrible type of man. Get some backbone into you!

PAT: Well, you needn't be breaking the little backbone I have!

Larry eats his breakfast, listening to a spirited quarrel between Reilly and his charge, and then turns hopelessly.

LARRY: I don't know what to do with you—on my word, I don't! (*Then, more kindly*) Come here, lad. Here, on my knee.

PAT (*reluctantly*): If I do, you'll say it's molly-coddling.

LARRY: No, I won't. After all, for all your seventeen years, you're only a little lad, and maybe— Sometimes I think I'm a poor hand at raising a boy, Pat. But my stepfather was a pretty wise man. He said in his will he thought it would do me good to have the responsibility of you—and it has, Pat. You've sort of crept into my heart, and—oh, but this is mush talk and not what I meant to say at all!

PAT: Oh, go on! I like it.

LARRY (*angrily*): Get up off my knee! What are you hanging all over me for? You make me ill! (*Pushes her away.*) I never saw such a lad!

PAT: No, and you never will! When I'm gone away in three years, over the cruel seas, you'll be sorry for the way you talked.

LARRY: I'll be damned glad to be rid of you! (*Then, turning abruptly*) See here, Pat, what's the use of our quarreling all the time? I want to do the right thing by you, lad. I want to make a man of you!

PAT: Well, you've got a job on your hands.

LARRY: And I will, egad! If I have to lick it into you. Do you hear me? Stop sulking! (*But PAT bursts into tears, and begs to be sent back to Ireland. She wants none of the money, and beseeches LARRY to accept it all. He comforts her, however, and reminds her of her father's last words, "Keep a stiff upper lip, Pat, keep a stiff upper lip." Presently she takes up the little harp and sings a wistful old ballad.*)

LARRY (*touched*): Splendid, Pat! I can shut my eyes and think myself a lad again. In June—roses and honeysuckle—and my mother luring me from play with that song. For God's sake, learn something more boyish! That's too damn' sentimental!

PAT: Well, there's no pleasin' some people!

When Vanderbilt comes to tell Larry of a turn in their affairs—that he has succeeded in interesting the New Brunswick people in the cherished steamship project, that the franchise has been granted, the contracts signed, and added only Larry's signature and check, the careless young inventor is

embarrassed. He has no money—has even mortgaged his income for a year. Vanderbilt is deeply disappointed.

LARRY (*distressed*): I had the money laid by. You had my word for it. But what is this insanity that makes me forget every obligation? It was a fortnight ago. We played heavily and I was losing. Every man Jack of them has my I O U. I don't



Peter Delmonico (William J. McClure) who furnishes a basketful of sandwiches at fifty cents for the prize fight.

own a thing in the world but this house, not a thing! I'm a fool—a damn' fool! You shan't lose by this, Vanderbilt. The engine is yours. I'll make every patent over to you. With them you can get the money.

VANDERBILT: Even if I were to accept your generous offer, there isn't a man in this town farsighted enough to venture on it. They think it's a dream, a regular line of steamships!

LARRY: Astor might.

VANDERBILT: No. The last person! His god is real estate. He's trying to buy up all of Manhattan Island.

Pat has overheard this conversation, and, alone in the garden a little later, when Mr. Astor calls, she seizes the opportunity to beg him for an advance of ten thousand dollars on her income. Pressed for her reasons, she admits that she wants to build a steamship, that it's for Larry's engine, which he may lose. But her guardian, though impressed, emphatically and firmly refuses.

ASTOR (*later discussing the boy with LARRY*): He has a loyal soul. Made me a fine proposition. Wanted to make his money, all of it, over to you, so that you could borrow on it.

LARRY: Egad! The little rascal! I get ready to kill him and then—he does something like this. By Jove, I wouldn't give him up if I could!

ASTOR: I haf come dis morning on business. I haf seen an opportunity to reinvest de boy's holdings. I am not obliged to consult you, but I prefer it. And dis is a case vere de income vill be much less for some twenty years. It is a block of twenty acres around Gramercy Pond.

LARRY: You don't mean over there by Peter Cooper's glue factory?

ASTOR: It will be a fine residence property. I know what I say. The pond will be drained. It will be called Gramercy Park.

LARRY: But it would be years—

ASTOR: Vot if he haf less income ven he is young? I did live on bread and milk ven I vas twenty-one, but I kept my holdings. I vas laughed at. The Wall Street property! Marsh and wild scrub! Look at it now. Twenty of de finest residences in de city!

VANDERBILT: Pardon me, Mr. Astor, but you see progress only in one way. Land is all very well, but the increase in the value of the land rests on the growth of the city, and that growth depends on transportation. The transportation of the future will be steam. Yes, sir; you mark my words—

steam! If you'd just put a little of the boy's money into our steamship, he'd be rich while he is still young.

But Astor is deaf to all arguments in favor of "toys."

Meantime Reilly informs Pat that Larry has invited guests for dinner, including Mistress de Puyster.

REILLY: You'd best make up to her, for she's going to get Master Larry whether or no. She's hot after him, and when a woman makes up her mind! Sure, and she's bilin' with money, and now that you've took all his— Well, it's meself thinks he's softenin' to her. It's the singin' does it, lad. Sure some day he'll be hangin' over the spinet, listenin', and he'll pop the question before he knows it!

When the guests arrive Pat finds it indeed difficult to refrain from impudent replies to the overtures of the gushing, condescending Ariana.

ARIANA: Oh, chick-a-dee-dee! Such manners! We must take him in hand.

BREVOORT: You'll have a handful! Larry spoils him so there's no living with him.

ARIANA: That won't do! Cultchah! Cultchah! We must have cultchah! How would you like to come to the Mansion at Haarlem for a visit, my little man? I have brothers—little gentlemen. Wouldn't you like to play with them?

PAT: No.

ARIANA: Tut-tut! Come now, we must be friends. See what I've brought you in my bag. A little pistolet and some powder caps to celebrate the Fourth! (*PAT bluntly refuses them.*)

IRVING: Don't bother with the lad, Mistress de Puyster. No female has ever been known to please him. (*LARRY enters gayly, bowing low over ARIANA'S hand.*)

ARIANA: We've been playing battledore for hours. I vow I'm a fright. I must titivate, really. I *must* titivate. Have you such a thing as a mirror in your bachelor establishment, you great bear?

LARRY: Oceans of 'em. Go in, Pat; show the ladies to the blue room.

PAT (*sulkily*): It's up the stairs to the right. She knows it. She's been here often enough. (*LARRY looks at her severely.*)

LARRY: We'll all go in. I'll have Reilly shake us a julep.

BREVOORT: Mistress de Puyster has promised to sing for us before dinner.

BETTY: Yes, a new song. It is all the rage in London.

ARIANA: Oh, la! I feel my courage ooz-

ing. It is a rather amorous ditty, "Robin Adair." Father thinks it scarcely proper for a girl to sing. You will have to encourage me before I dare sing it.

PAT: You didn't need much encouragement the last time.

LARRY (*sternly*): Pat! Will you all go in? I'll join you in a moment. (*Alone with PAT, he demands an explanation of such rudeness.*)

LARRY: There's a thrashing due you. I've threatened it and, by Heaven, if you don't mend your ways, you'll get it!

PAT: It's only when she comes you talk to me this way. Why doesn't she stay in Haarlem? What does she do visiting Betty Schuyler every week? It's to be near you! She's setting her cap for you, and she'll get you—and a fine life you'll lead with "cultchah—cultchah"—all over the place! Never mind. You'll soon marry a rich lady, and then you can build your steamship!

LARRY: You little wretch!

PAT (*running off*): "Cultchah! Cultchah!" I adore "cultchah!" Oh, dear me! I must "titivate!" Oh, yes, "cultchah, cultchah!" (*Exits.*)

Hardly has Larry gone back to his guests before Bully Boy Brewster and his "wild-cat sister," Rachel, enter the garden. They are stopped by Pat, who informs them that Mr. Delevan has company and cannot see them.

RACHEL (*truculently*): Oh, so you're the young rip that took Mr. Delevan's money!

PAT: Don't you call me names, you! You're not a lady, I can see that!

BREWSTER: Hold hard, there! Hold hard, there, you little runt! You can't talk to a respectable sister that way—oh, no, by no manner of means!

PAT (*frightened*): You—you bully! I'm not afraid of you!

BREWSTER (*pulling off coat*): On my eye! You ain't, ain't you? Why, you'd fall dead if I fanned the air with me fist! (*Dances about PAT, tantalizingly feinting at blows.*)

PAT: You're no gentleman!

BREWSTER: Oh, I ain't, ain't I? Here's just a little sample of what I do to them as calls names! (*Taps her on the cheek.*)

PAT: You! You! How dare you touch me! (*She flies at him, pounding his chest and kicking at him.*) I'll show you—I'll scratch your eyes out!

BREWSTER (*holding her hands and laughing*): Oh, he's beatin' me ter death! Oh, oh! It's a gallinipper what's bitin' me. That's what! (LARRY, HALLECK, and BREWSTER come running out.)

LARRY (*pulling them apart*): Pat! Brewster! What does this mean?

BREWSTER: I was only foolin', gov'nor.

LARRY: Well, you ought to be ashamed of yourself, teasing a child.

PAT (*to BREWSTER*): It's lucky for you Mr. Delevan pulled me off!

LARRY: Now, see here, Brewster, if you've come about the purse for the fight, I've told you that I can't put it up.

RACHEL: But listen here, you can't go back on my brother that a way!

BREWSTER: Didn't you tell me to train, and didn't I done it? Look at me chest, look at me middle. I'm primed, I am! What's the idea of droppin' me and ruinin' me reputation?

RACHEL: And me with fifty dollars laid out in sandwiches and small beer? They're giving odds on "The Terror." You could make a fortune out of me brother.

Larry's need for cash, that he may not fail Vanderbilt, is great. Halleck suggests that he take a sporting chance on Bully Boy. Brevoort, who has bet on "The Terror" at five to one, consents to loan Larry five hundred for the purse and to give him a side bet of two thousand at five to one, with the Delevan house and grounds as security. The Brewsters are sent off satisfied, and the sound of Ariana's voice singing "Robin Adair" recalls the young men to the house.

REILLY (*chuckling at PAT, who stands consolately at the gate*): That'll fetch him, lad—that'll fetch him!

PAT (*picking up her harp*): I'll fetch him meself! (*Plays again the captivating Irish song, "Do you hear me callin'," which LARRY liked so much. But there is no response. Rising angrily, she rests the harp on the table, pulling the strings savagely and singing in like mood. At last LARRY appears in the doorway. She finishes the song softly, with a note of triumph.*)

That night the fight is staged at the fire-engine house. Amid great excitement Bully Boy Brewster is knocked down for the fourth time by "The Terror." Pat, peering in through an upper window, realizes that Larry is losing, and rings the fire bell. Bully Boy jumps for his shirt, and the Fighting Fire Laddies for their helmets. But there is trouble ahead when the alarm



PAT: Oh, Mr. Astor, you'll say good-by to me kindly? I love you, indeed I do—for all you're so "stiff."

is found to be false, and Pat, in answer to Larry's demand, confesses that it was she who rang the bell.

PAT: I couldn't let them go on! Oh, Larry, you won't lose the house now!

LARRY (*furious*): How *dared* you?

PAT: But Brewster was losin'!

BOOKMAKER: You bet he was! (*Several men demand their money.*) Ask this welsher (*pointing to LARRY*) to settle up! I ain't a-going to pay on no cooked fight! He has his house up, and him and the boy fixed it to stop it!

MAN: What! Fixed it! We want our money! We want a fair fight! Come on, you dirty blood! (*Crowd threatens LARRY.*)

LARRY (*taking off his coat*): Talk about a fair fight—give me one! Out of this, Pat!

PAT: No! No! Men, you listen to me. He'll pay everything. He has plenty of money. You won't lose a cent. It's all my fault. I'm a thief! A rogue! Let them bring on their bloodhounds!

RACHEL: What's that?

PAT: Larry, I'm not meself at all. I'm me sister!

RACHEL (*grabbing PAT's arm*): A gell! I calls you all to witness. I claims that reward for thief catchin'!

LARRY (*throwing her aside*): You get out of here! (*In the midst of a free-for-all fight IRVING, HALLECK, BREVOORT, and REILLY rush in and rescue LARRY and PAT.*)

By morning Larry has begun to recover from his amazement, and is chiefly concerned in saving Pat from appearing before the Town Council. A warrant has been issued for her arrest for ringing the fire bell and causing a riot. Much frightened, and unable to face Larry, she has locked herself in her room; but Betty Schuyler finally induces her to dress in a gown she has brought over.

Larry has been trying desperately to get Mr. Astor, whose word is law in the council, to come to the house to talk to Pat. Finally Halleck persuades him to come. Meantime Pat, utterly charming in Betty's gown, steals down to beg Reilly to help her to get to Boston. A cousin of her father's lives there, who, she hopes, will help to get her back to the old country. Turning, she finds herself face to face with Larry.

LARRY: Pat—Patricia!

PAT: Oh, Larry! Say it and be done with it. Tell me you despise me, and send me away. Oh, Larry, you'll never understand why I did it! I wanted to tell you from the first day, but I was a coward, and—and—I don't want your money, but I couldn't bear to leave you, and I knew if I told, it would be all over and you'd send me away.

LARRY: Good Lord! When I think of the things I've said to you! How could you have endured it! How can you forgive me!

I've treated you abominably, like a brute. Why, you sweet, delicate little thing, what must you have thought of me?

PAT: Well, there's no denyin' you were rather rough with me.

LARRY: A girl in my house! All these months! What affronts I have put upon you—the wild carousing—the rough talk—

PAT: It's true. Many's the time I've had to cover me ears.

LARRY: Say you'll forget it, Pat, everything—and—and let us begin all over again. You and me—a different way—I mean—

PAT: Well, of course, I couldn't stay with you now, Larry—since I'm a girl. As you say, it isn't a proper place for me.

LARRY: But I'm going to be different. Give me another chance— (*MR. ASTOR is announced.*)

Stern in his regard for the law, and undoubtedly chagrined by the way in which he has been deceived by the O'Days, Mr. Astor orders Bunny to read the charges against Pat.

BUNNY (*importantly*): I charge this young woman with unlawful ringin' of the fire bell—resultin' in four town lanterns smashed, sixty windowpanes broken, and ten cracked heads, and the disturbin' of the peaceful sleep of citizens.

LARRY: See here. She didn't know. She had no idea it would stir up a riot.

BUNNY: They're a-sayin', sir, that this young "blood" had his house pledged on the fight, and him and the gell fixed it up to stop it. (*LARRY protests.*)

ASTOR: I haf heard dis disgraceful report with regret.

LARRY: You can't believe, sir, that I was guilty of any underhand action.

BUNNY: There's plenty that does. Wasn't you hooted on the streets this mornin'?

PAT: Oh, Larry! It's true I've brought you only bad luck!

LARRY: Bad luck! Why, it was the best thing that ever happened, your coming—

ASTOR: Delevan! Do you vant me to hear de evidence or no?

BUNNY (*taking small book from pocket*): I've got the code book, sir, and she's guilty on four counts. Number one: Any person incitin' a riot, or stirrin' up mobs resultin' in destruction to city property, is guilty of a misdemeanor. Two years—county jail. Number two: Any person who falsely impersonates another, and in such assumed character receives property or money for person so impersonated, is guilty of a felony, punishable by not less than ten years in State's prison. Number three: Disguised or

masked persons. Any person found wearin' a disguise or mask, or habiliments of the opposite sex, shall be held a rogue. Guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by not less than three years in the county jail. Number four: Indecent exposure of person." (To ASTOR) I take it a girl's legs in boys' trousers is exposure! (LARRY protests.)

ASTOR: Law is law, Delevan. Ve are trying to know de vorst of dis affair.

BUNNY: There's other possible charges, sir. Entering a house with intent to steal. Felony. Five years. Forgery—if she signed her brother's name to any document. Five years. Larceny—false witness—perjury—

PAT: I just want to explain that the whole thing was your fault, Mr. Astor.

ASTOR: Mine? Vot do you mean?

PAT: I mean about last night. You see, if you'd loaned the money to Larry for Mr. Vanderbilt's steamboat, as I advised you to, he wouldn't have backed the fight at all—and then I wouldn't have been there to ring the bell and made the cracked heads and all. So you see you ought to take some of the blame, because you were so "tight." And it wasn't your own money, either.

ASTOR: Vell, upon my vord! Fine logic!

PAT: 'Tain't logic, but it's God's truth!

ASTOR: I fear you know very little of God's truth.

PAT: I fear I do. I've only had the company of men all me life.

Sadly, but still stern in his judgment of Pat, Mr. Astor orders Bunny to bring her before the Town Council at ten o'clock. Larry beseeches him to hear first all of Pat's story. It is a touching story of bleak poverty on the cruel north coast of Ireland, of her brother's death by starvation, of the fortune that came to him too late, and of her childish obedience to her father's wishes. All her listeners are deeply affected. Even Bunny, when sent from the room, puts in a plea for her. And then Mr. Astor, in his own

words, "throws away de principles of a lifetime." His ship, the *Star of India*, sails that day, and he sends Hal-leck off posthaste to reserve a cabin upon it for Pat.

ASTOR: I am going to walk to de town hall. My coach is at de door and at your service. The watchman is at de back. If he reports you escaped him, I vill say nothing, God forgive me! (PAT runs to him and throws her arms about his neck.)

PAT (alone with LARRY): I ought to be grateful, but me heart's like a lump of lead.

LARRY: You can't go! You shan't! What'll you do over there alone?

PAT: I'll go to me aunt in Dunwiddy. She always wanted me to come—to marry me off.

LARRY: What! You married! You're only a child. I forbid it!

PAT: Well, your bein' so far away—I fear she'll not listen to you. Oh, yes, she'll marry me off! And—and I hope you'll marry, too, Larry, and give up your wild ways.

LARRY: I'll never marry.

PAT: Oh, yes, you will! But promise me one thing, Larry. You'll not marry Ariana de Puyster? I couldn't bear it! Not that it's anything to me, but I want you to have a sensible woman, Larry.

LARRY: I don't want a sensible woman. Oh—Pat—Patricia! I want you! And now—now I must lose you! (REILLY, busy with bags and packing, hurries in.)

REILLY: We'll all sail together! The old man says, Mr. Larry, he thinks a year abroad will be good for you. By that time last night's scandal will be forgotten—and when you return with your bride—

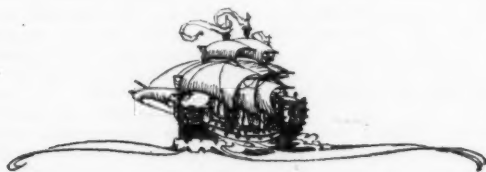
LARRY: My bride! My— What nonsense are you talking?

REILLY: Astor's a prince! He's sendin' a priest to the boat, waitin' for you. There's a cabin for two and a cubby-hole for me!

LARRY: A priest?

PAT: Reilly! Would you think any man could be so thick?

LARRY (clasping her in his arms): Pat—Patricia!





A Gentleman *from* India

By Arthur Tuckerman

Author of "The Silver Lady," "Phyllis and the Bright Lights," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY T. VICTOR HALL

In which the name of K. Kandan, late of Oxford University, is cleared of disgrace.

THERE were plenty of vacant places, I remember, in the vast, dimly lighted hall of St. Mary's that night. Nearly all the men taking law—St. Mary's is, of course, noted for her percentage of legal students—remained in their rooms, probably to make a last desperate survey of their notes in preparation for the ordeal of schools on the morrow. It was well on toward the end of Trinity Term, the eleventh of June to be exact, and the date was fraught with a certain amount of dread for all the potential lawyers among us.

As soon as the dismal meal was over, I hurried through the quadrangle cloister to K. Kandan's rooms. As usual his outer door, his "oak," was wide open, a whimsical reminder of the fact that he dreaded to imply a possible inhospitality to any mortal soul. I discovered him in the act of struggling into his overcoat, a heavy, woollen thing which struck me as rather absurd in view of the mildness of the evening; but then K. Kandan, you see, had never grown altogether used to the intermittent dampness of an Oxford summer. He had a thick muffler, too, wound about his delicate throat.

It was on the tip of my tongue to ask him where he was going, but I thought better of it in time. He moved, I realized, in a little world of his own creation; he was always such a tolerant,

incurious kind of fellow that you felt he was justified in demanding exactly the same qualities in his associates.

"Ah! Hello, Pearson!"

He came forward to greet me with that subtle air of intense good breeding which was a dominant characteristic of him. He was tall, almost painfully so, and thin as a young sapling. His unbuttoned overcoat revealed rough, blue-gray tweeds which fitted him with a kind of careless, easy perfection. His features, incisive and aquiline, reminded you vaguely of some splendid old cameo.

"Sit down, please," he insisted gently, with a sweep of his hand toward an armchair. As he moved about the room, the mellow lamplight glowed upon his fine copper skin, made his sleek black hair suddenly lustrous.

"Not working?" I asked. "How about to-morrow, Kandan? They all expect you to be triumphant, remember. You're the legal pride of St. Mary's."

He appeared slightly shocked at my facetiousness.

"My dear Pearson, how could any man work on the night before schools? What I need, just now, is diversion, but then you Americans are always so damned efficient, aren't you?"

He started to take off his overcoat, but I arose hurriedly.

"Kandan," I began severely—I liked

to be severe with him because it helped me to remember that I was two years his senior—"you're too polite to live; sometimes I'm afraid that you'll never acquire the brutal frankness that becomes an undergraduate. You ought to say to me: 'I'm busy, confound you, Pearson; get out!' Then you'd be a perfectly normal St. Mary's man!"

He laughed vaguely. "As a matter of fact, I was going over to Banbury to see a chap who wants to sell me a horse, a superb chestnut hunter. However, a little thing like that can——"

"I'm not going to argue with you," I told him as I reached the door. "I'm going back to my rooms for a last plunge at trig. Perhaps you've forgotten that I'm up for Honor Maths to-morrow. As for you, since you're so confident, you'd better go to Banbury by all means."

He proffered an elaborate silver box containing cigarettes which were gold-tipped and bore his initials—one of his little whims.

"Eh—have something to drink before you go. You really must——"

He glided over to his sideboard, a high, frowning thing of black oak. His rooms were, in a way, a constant reminder of his own irreproachable taste; dark, rather subdued furnishings which had become mellowed with age; an etching by Besnard or Helleu here and there upon the decorous gray walls—simple, yet magnificent in the aggregate effect.



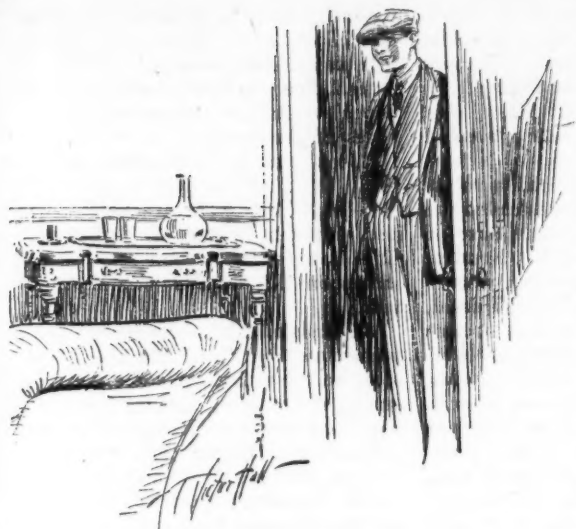
"Ah! Hello, Pearson!"
He came forward to greet me with his subtle air of intense good breeding.

"A little Madeira?" he suggested. His voice had a peculiar, velvety quality.

I shook my head and prepared to leave, deaf to his polite protests.

After I had climbed the stairs and reached my own rooms, I had the satisfaction of hearing his car throbbing outside the college gates. A clock in Holywell was chiming the hour of eight.

Somehow I found my thoughts drifting to K. Kandan that evening. We always called him that at St. Mary's; his first name, you see, was an utterly unpronounceable thing of twelve syllables which, after some jesting when we first heard it, we preferred to ignore. The grandson of a once-powerful Nerbudda prince of the Central Provinces, he had come to Oxford already perfectly educated it seemed to



us. We found him an idealist who looked at life through rose-colored spectacles. He was a splendid host, dignified yet cordial, delightfully entertaining to any one who crossed his threshold. Perhaps his versatility was the most striking thing about him; I have heard him discuss Tory Anglicanism with an Oxford don in a way which made the old gentleman turn purple with the futility of his own arguments; again, he more than held his own with the pale young Germans who used to seek him out to discuss metaphysics with him.

The only thing which ever approached discord in his university career—until the time of this story—was his attitude toward certain other Indians in Oxford. There were questions of caste and tradition, obscurely and intimately woven with the centuries, I believe, things which we Americans and English could never hope to understand. Be that as it may, he seemed to keep himself definitely aloof from a particular Indian clique in one

of the smaller colleges, although when they chose to call upon him, he was hospitality personified.

He was generous, even lavish. Nothing could be too good for those whom he liked. He was popular, but he had no particular friends. And yet, separated by indefinable barriers from the English and many of his own kind, he seemed to lead a quietly happy existence. I am forced to conclude that the only reason I knew him slightly better than the rest

was because his rooms were on the same staircase as mine. Old Timberhall, too, of All Souls, knew him pretty well and vowed that he was the "brightest young man, brown, white, or yellow, whom he ever had the pleasure of tutoring."

About half past ten a thunderstorm burst over Oxford, and the rain came sweeping in opaque silver sheets across the quadrangle. I went to fasten my windows, which were crashing helplessly to and fro. After a while the thunder rolled off into the distance, but the rain continued in a steady, dreary downpour. I continued to read, became lost in a maze of confused calculations.

Just before midnight I heard footsteps in the hallway beneath my rooms, and presently the sound of K. Kandan's door being closed softly. I remember being vaguely pleased that he was in safely from that deluge.

Renfrew came prancing into my rooms the next morning as I was finishing breakfast.

"Come down with me to K. Kandans!" he bellowed. "We'll give him a rousing send-off just because he gets so fed up with that kind of thing!"

A colossal, boisterous fellow, this Renfrew, with a round, ruddy face and irrepressible spirits.

"I wish," he remarked with a palpable tinge of envy as we descended the stairs, "that we could feel as sure of ourselves in honors as K. Kandans. Damnably clever these Indians, what?"

Kandans' "oak" was ajar as usual, and we entered. The sun was streaming obliquely through the narrow windows of the drawing-room, creating bars of gold in the blue haze of tobacco smoke. A fire was burning in the grate, and on the table in the middle of the room there lay an indiscriminate heap of hastily scribbled notes and ponderous legal volumes, also one thin book bound in pale green, bearing the title: "Some Aspects of the Anglo-Indian Code." All these little details came back to me vividly, in view of the tragedy which followed.

The door to his bedroom was closed, and through it came the sound of the deep, steady breathing of a person serenely asleep.

"Wake him up, Pearson!" Renfrew roared. "Wake him up! He's due at the Ashmolean at nine-thirty for his first examination. Heavens, what a tragedy, if he slept till noon!"

He began to bellow at his own sense of humor.

I opened the door. K. Kandans was asleep in his white cot, one purple-silked arm flung carelessly across his pillow.

"Pearson! Oh, my God!"

From behind me I heard a gasping sound, a queer, dreadful moan. Renfrew was beckoning to me; he seemed speechless, stupefied. I glanced back at Kandans, and hurried to Renfrew's side; his face was suddenly pale.

He had idly picked up a book from

the table, the volume on the Anglo-Indian Code, and had opened it at the title page. Dumbly he gestured toward several finely printed, loose sheets of paper which were lying between the pages of the book.

"Look at them," he managed to whisper.

I did. They were examination papers for the Degree of Bachelor of Civil Law for the current year, the examination K. Kandans was about to take.

All kinds of things happened in quick succession after that. We heard footsteps on the stairs, some one knocking gently at the door. Instinctively, and simultaneously, Renfrew and I reached toward the table and closed the green volume; that was all we had time to do.

Old Timberhall came into the room, nodding his white head gayly at us; his thin, mobile lips quivered into a smile, that wonderful smile which had made him beloved of all undergraduates for years and years.

"Good morning, gentlemen. I had—eh—come to borrow a book from young Kandans. Have either of you happened to see a volume concerning the Anglo-Indian Code, a new book which was recently published in Bombay? If you know where it is, there will be no need to disturb him."

The smile slowly vanished from his lips; he peered at us sharply from under enormous, shaggy eyebrows.

"You seem distressed."

He laid his badly folded umbrella upon a chair; he always carried it, no matter how fine the weather. Silly little things like that come back to me distinctly now.

We were both helplessly mute.

He tottered over to the table, and his watery, china-blue eyes lighted up with pleasure as he caught sight of the green book. Before we could speak, the bedroom door opened and K. Kandans pattered into the room, clad in a mag-

nificent gold and yellow dressing gown. For an instant he stood still, rubbing his eyes at the sudden glare of the sunlight, a comic yet picturesque figure.

"There's the book you wanted to borrow," he began, catching sight of Timberhall.

But the old don seemed suddenly stricken. He had opened the book. His eyes, bulging grotesquely from their sockets, became fixed on the examination papers; the blue-veined cords of his thin neck tightened and twitched strangely; he made an ineffectual swallowing movement in his throat.

"Kandan," he said—and his voice quavered like that of a man who has lost a great friend—"Kandan! How did you come by—these things?"

Kandan went to the table, and glanced at the papers in Timberhall's trembling hand. We saw his cheeks grow queerly pale beneath his copper skin.

"I—I don't know," he stammered; "I don't know at all."

Old Timberhall glanced over at Renfrew and me; we were standing mutely by the window.

"Gentlemen," he said very quietly, "please don't think me discourteous if I ask you to leave while this little matter is cleared up, as I pray it will be."

We crept out together in silence.

Along with many others I passed that day in a vast, dimly lighted hall, grinding out solutions to seemingly endless questions set before us on finely printed sheets of paper. Two aged professors dozed complacently on a high dais at the end of the hall, stirring themselves occasionally to hand us out more stationery or new sets of problems. As the great clock in the tower above us boomed five, we streamed out into the sunlight and scattered in little groups over Cornmarket, laughing, joking, quizzing each other, ready to forget our cares in a few

hours of merriment until the great clock summoned us again the next morning.

As I hurried through the crumbling gray cloisters of St. Mary's, my thoughts turned to K. Kandan. Irrepressible curiosity took me straight to his rooms. I found them in a state of utter confusion; clothing was heaped upon the chairs, half-packed trunks and trays were lying all over the floor.

He looked up as I entered, his hair tousled, an infinitely weary look in his eyes.

"I'm going—leaving Oxford to-night," he announced softly.

I confess that I was bewildered, thunderstruck.

"But, Kandan, surely the thing was cleared up?"

He shook his head slowly, slumped into an armchair, and gazed unseeingly through the window at the ivy-splashed walls of the chapel across the quadrangle.

"Old Timberhall was just about as decent as he could be," he admitted presently. "He scurried all over town during the morning arranging a special meeting of big wigs at lunch hour, and had me up before them. He did it all so quietly that no one seems to know about it."

"But you were able to convince them——"

"I'll tell you exactly what happened," he interposed, "because—well—I want you to know. As for the rest——"

He waved his hand in an almost contemptuous gesture.

"I went up before this tribunal; there were about ten of them, proctors and dons in cap and gown. It seems that last night between eleven and twelve the storeroom of the press, where the examination papers are printed, was broken into. The night assistant, who was working late, had gone out for a few minutes to buy some tobacco. When he returned, he found that one

set of the papers he had been printing had been stolen. All this only came to light this morning."

He paused a moment, smiling queerly.

"In the storeroom, near the door, the investigators found a cigarette stub with the initials K. K. on it, one of my cigarettes, Pearson. I was the only man on the university roll with those initials."

"All of which is merely circumstantial," I interrupted.

"Yes, they were inclined to treat it so. What they wanted me to do was to state exactly where I was between eleven and twelve last night. In other words, they hoped I could give them an alibi which they could prove, and thus satisfy their own consciences. Old Timberhall seemed to have prejudiced them in my favor somehow."

"That's fair enough," I told him. "You could have called me in to help you out. You left college for Banbury at eight; the distance is, say, twenty-two miles. Presuming you got there by nine and stayed a couple of hours, you'd be back here scarcely before midnight. Any one in Banbury would be willing to help you verify that——"

He looked at me in a way which suddenly struck me as pathetic.

"Pearson, even if I *could* lie, it wouldn't be of the slightest use. I saw my man in Banbury at nine o'clock; it took me exactly half an hour to close the bargain. Then I stopped at the Red Lion, filled my tank, and started back to Oxford at a quarter to ten."

I began to grow exasperated.

"But, damn it, where were you between that time and midnight—when you entered your rooms? The night porter here says that you entered at eleven-fifty-five."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Exactly. I'm not denying the night porter's statement or assenting to it. I

prefer to keep my business to myself."

"Don't be a fool," I protested. "Tell every one where you went after you left Banbury."

An angry flush surged into his cheeks. He rose, hands thrust deep in his pockets, and began to pace the room.

"That's just what those doddering old men insisted on knowing—and I *wouldn't think of telling them!*"

"Why?"

"Pearson, there are some things a man need never tell even his best friends. I swore to those old men that I'd never been near the press, didn't even know where it was. They telephoned to the Red Lion at Banbury, and the garage man there verified my story. Unfortunately, he added that I only took two gallons in my tank, as I said I was going straight back to Oxford. One of the proctors summed up the whole thing by stating that he was inclined to believe in my innocence, if I would only tell him where I went for those two hours after I left Banbury."

"Think what it means," I begged him. "Failure to take your degree, a possible cloud over you all your life, just on account of stubbornness. For I know you *could* prove your innocence, somehow."

He turned to me suddenly.

"Do you ever read Epictetus? I find him very consoling at times. 'To be condemned,' he says, 'as that is the act of another man, so it is the evil of another man. He condemns you unjustly; then he is the wretched one.' That, in a way, is how I feel about it all."

"Very pretty philosophy, but it won't help you much nowadays."

His lips were compressed.

"Please," he said sternly, "let us not refer to this aspect of the matter again. I will never tell. You can assure yourself of that."

But he could not help adding, with a helpless, pleading note in his voice:

"And yet I really think you and old Timberhall believe in me still."

"We do!"

"Thanks for that," he said simply, and extended his hand. "The best of luck to you, Pearson, after I've gone. And, by the way, you know my London address, should you even want to look me up."

He left at six o'clock. As he took his seat at the wheel of his car, he said to me:

"Promise me that you won't try—to find out."

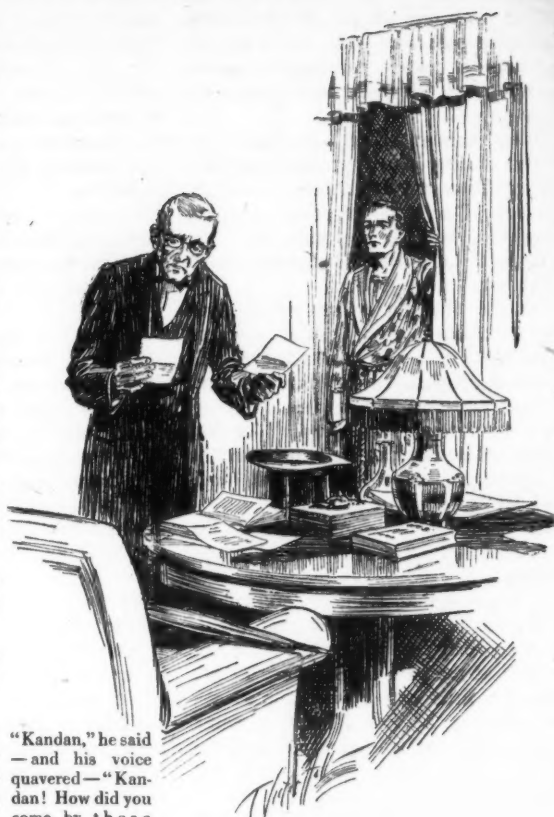
I promised, but he was not reckoning on Timberhall.

Two days later a queer little thing happened. Green, the staircase scout, came to my door late one evening after he had finished sweeping up K. Kandan's rooms.

"Mr. Pearson, sir," he mumbled, "I found this here in Mr. Kandan's apartment. I thought you might see him in vacation and give it to him."

He handed me a handkerchief, a tiny, feminine bit of lace; in one corner it had the initials D. L. embroidered in a wreath of flowers. I remember now that I slipped it into a drawer and forgot all about it until Timberhall said something that recalled it.

Some days later—in fact, the last



"Kandan," he said—and his voice quavered—"Kandan! How did you come by these things?"

day of Term—I received a summons from Timberhall. He lived in a quaint little set of rooms over a branch post office in the High. They were dark, fairly comfortable old cubby-holes. When I entered his study, he was sprawled in an armchair, gazing abstractedly at the empty fireplace. He pointed the finger of scorn at the gown I was wearing, purely out of deference to custom.

"Discard that badge of servitude," he commanded with a chuckle; "you come to me as a friend, not as an aggrieved and downtrodden undergraduate."

That was one of his favorite little jokes; he possessed—like many of his vocation—a certain intermittent spark of humor of which he was preposterously proud.

"This Kandam affair," he began abruptly, placing his finger tips together; "it's worried me frightfully. Such a fine lad. One hates to think, even, of things like that. If you care, however, to listen to an old man's thoughts——"

"Please," I begged him.

"In the first place I've managed to keep the thing more or less of a secret; it would be only fair until the evidence is found conclusive. So far, you and I, Renfrew, and a few men high up are the only ones who know. The rest believe that Kandam left on account of illness, or something of that kind. Now let us do a little retracing."

He settled back comfortably in his chair and lighted a well-stained meerschauum.

"We know that Kandam left college in his car at eight o'clock that night. At nine-thirty the night porter came on duty at the gate of St. Mary's. By dint of a little tact I was able to see his register; he has Kandam's name down as entering college at eleven-fifty-five."

I nodded.

"That agrees with the time I heard footsteps in his room."

He made a motion to me not to interrupt him.

"I asked the night porter whether he actually *saw* Kandam come in; he admitted that he did not. It was a dark, wet night, and, hearing the gate clang, he called out from his booth: 'Who's there?' A voice sang out 'K. Kandam.' Point number one: Kandam may not have entered college at eleven-fifty-five."

"But what does that prove?"

"You have all the impatience of extreme youth," he said a little testily. "Now, hark unto what follows; it will

interest you. I went to the garage near Foley Bridge, where Kandam keeps his car, and interviewed the young man who is on duty at night there. He informed me positively that the car did not enter the garage until four o'clock the morning after the storm! He remembers the fact distinctly because it was covered with mud and he had a hard time cleaning it."

"Four the next morning!" I breathed. "But—how did K. Kandam get into St. Mary's?"

Timberhall arose from his chair and towered above me.

"Pearson, do you mean to pretend that you are unaware of an extremely low stretch of wall at the end of the chapel lawn? Do you pretend, sir, that you have never found that wall convenient, damned convenient? You forget that I was a St. Mary's man myself. Come, come. Pose not as a model of virtue before me, lest I grow to hate you!"

"He could have climbed the wall, as I have done," I admitted cheerfully. Dear old Timberhall!

He seemed satisfied.

"To continue. You remember that book on the Anglo-Indian Code? I called on the fatal morning to borrow it, by appointment. On the day before Kandam had mentioned it to me here in these rooms, during his last period with me. The book interested me, and I said I would like to borrow it. He told me that he was going to Banbury that night, but asked me to drop in the next morning before he left to take his examinations. The point of all this is that there was another student present at the time, but I can't remember who it was. My memory is, unfortunately, not what it used to be, Pearson."

For a few moments I was lost in thought.

"Was it G. Rabaninji?" I suggested. "He is a noncollegiate man."

He almost leaped into the air.

"Good heavens! How did you guess? Not that man, but his elder brother, M. Rabaninji."

I tried to explain.

"The Rabaninjis, you see, were—well—sort of leaders in Indian activities before K. Kandan came. It was obvious that they resented his growing influence and popularity. They were not the same type of man as he. And when he was elected president of a certain club—"

"I understand," he said, nodding his old head. "Now we have what we lacked all along—motive. In other words, I am inclined to presume that this affair was what you Americans delightfully term a 'frame-up.'"

He smacked his lips over the word.

"Now what can Kandan have been doing—all that night?" I asked him fatuously.

He answered with a sudden terseness:

"In my mind, there's only one solution when a man acts in the way Kandan has done. There's a woman mixed up in it."

Of course I remembered the handkerchief that Green had found in Kandan's rooms. I told Timberhall about it.

"A small clew, indeed," he remarked, "but far better than nothing. I can count on you to help me in this business?"

I shook my head.

"I'm sorry. He made me promise that I wouldn't try to find out anything."

"Then," he said quietly, "I'll do it myself."

The solution of it all came many weeks afterward, suddenly and unexpectedly. During the long vacation I did not see K. Kandan. When I called at his London address, they told me that he had gone to Cornwall to some obscure little fishing village down Pol-

perro way. He had, apparently, sought solitude, and had found it to his liking. No word came from him. I returned to Oxford at the beginning of Michaelmas Term for some post-graduate work. Gradually, but surely, K. Kandan became a mere memory. I am afraid that is the way with most of us anyway. His name was rarely mentioned at St. Mary's. But the secret of his leaving still remained a secret, I am glad to say; it never became public property.

During the third week of Michaelmas Term, Timberhall telephoned me. When I heard his creaky old voice straining over the wire, it gave me a sudden feeling of pleasure.

"Pearson," he began, a trifle diffidently I thought, "I want you to have tea with me at The Mitre this afternoon about half past four. Will you meet me there *surely*?"

Considerably mystified, I agreed. It was hard to understand why he should ask me to tea in a hotel, when he had comfortable rooms of his own in which to entertain.

No sooner had I shaken hands with him in the diminutive drawing-room of the hotel than he produced from the pocket of his overcoat a crumpled sheet of pink note paper which he handed to me in silence. I read:

DEAR MR. TIMBERHALL: You probably never have heard of me, but I am taking the liberty of asking you if you would be willing to spare me an hour of your time. I will be in Oxford on Tuesday afternoon, and would be infinitely obliged if you could meet me at The Mitre, say at five o'clock, to talk over a certain matter which interests both of us.

Sincerely yours,

DORIS LATHAM.

P. S.—When answering, please do not ask what it is about.

The writing was regular, childishly round, rather prime.

"And who is Doris Latham?" I blurted out.

"The Lathams are one of the oldest

families in the county," he said slowly; landowners, I believe. Queer people in their way. They are aloof, keep entirely to their country place, which is some twenty miles from here, at the edge of the Cotswolds. It's a matter of common gossip that they have a beautiful niece who has been brought up in rather strict seclusion. Now you know as much about them as I do."

"Any idea why she wants to see you?"

He darted a quizzical glance at me. "You're not as sharp as I thought you were. Do you remember the initials on that handkerchief?"

"Good heavens! You mean K. Kandand?"

"Precisely." He began warming his hands before the drawing-room fire. "I think I hear her coming now."

She entered the room at a quick, nervous gait; a trim, very slender girl with hair the color of dark autumn leaves and the bloom of October winds upon her cheeks. She wore tweeds which suited her immensely. She held her head rather proudly, and there was a faintly disdainful little curve to her lips; you knew at once that she was well—a patrician. I guessed her age at about seventeen.

She shook hands in a demure fashion with Timberhall, saw me, and frowned slightly. Timberhall hastened to explain.

"I took the liberty of bringing Mr. Pearson with me, Miss Latham, as he is as interested in K. Kandand's welfare as I am."

Her eyes widened.

"How did you know that I came to see you about Mr. Kandand?"

He beamed at her.

"Purely an assumption. Little things made me suspect it. And now, Miss Latham, what, exactly, is troubling you?"

Again she glanced at me, and, noticing her confusion, I rose to go.

"Perhaps you'd rather not—" I began.

But she very politely and kindly signified that she wished me to stay. And then she turned to Timberhall.

"Didn't Mr. Kandand get his degree? I looked through the lists in *The Times* in vain, and then I began to hear queer rumors, all kinds of things—"

It was evident that she was much more anxious than she wanted us to believe.

"He did not," Timberhall replied brusquely, "because he was never allowed to take the examination."

All the color fled from her cheeks.

"Why?" she gasped. "Didn't he—get back in time?"

The old fellow's eyebrows shot up at that.

"He was back in time, my dear young lady, but there was an absence from college which had to be explained, and he refused to explain it."

Her hand fluttered to her breast; for an instant she swayed, ever so slightly, forward. She was, of a sudden, white and quivering.

"For God's sake," she breathed, "and I—I was responsible!"

Old Timberhall crossed over to her, touched her slim shoulder gently.

"Please," he said very softly, "you are with Kandand's friends, and—permit me to say it—yours, too. Anything which you choose to tell us will, of course, be respected, will never get beyond us. But if you could shed a little light on this affair we would be infinitely grateful."

She drew herself up with a proud little movement and, gazing steadily into the fire as if to avoid our eyes, began her story.

"There are one or two things—frightfully embarrassing little things—which I must first explain to make the whole story clear to you."

She was quite brave and lovely just then, I thought, and, glancing at old

Timberhall, I knew that he felt the same way about her.

"Since my father and mother died when I was very young, I've been brought up at Sunsbury House near Burford. Somehow I've never done things like other girls of my age."

She turned desperately to Timberhall, and I couldn't help feeling a trifle jealous.

"You've heard of the Lathams—how old-fashioned they are?"

He nodded in silence.

"Well"—she paused, and blushed pitifully—"oh, I suppose I've got to tell it. There was a man—never mind his name—an architect from London, who came down to Burford in connection with the new house that's being built on the Islesborough place. I used to see him quite often when I went riding in mornings. We grew to be friends. I—I began to get silly ideas——"

She bit her lip. At the same instant, as our eyes met, Timberhall and I realized the sacrifice she must be making, apparently for K. Kandan.

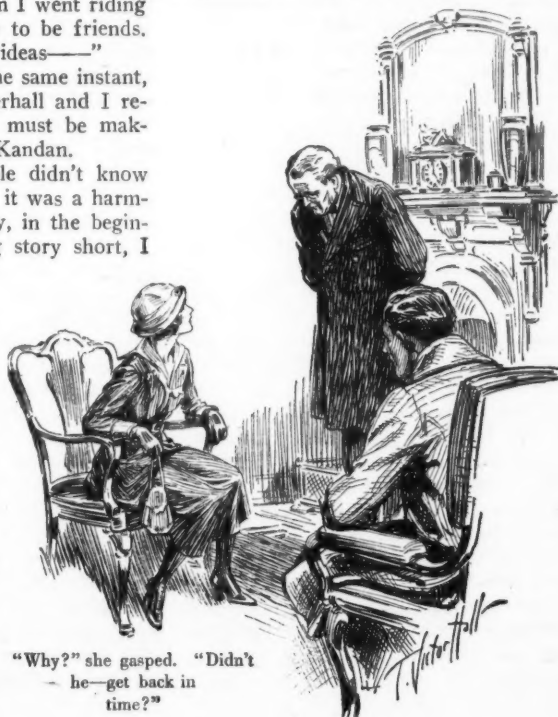
"Of course my people didn't know anything about all this; it was a harmless little affair, anyway, in the beginning. To make a long story short, I arranged to go motoring with this man one evening, secretly, just for a lark. You can realize what a little thing like that meant to me.

"He called for me after dinner. My aunt and uncle had gone to the rectory to dine, and I slipped out easily through the garden gate. I made him promise to bring me back by half past ten, feeling that I would be safe if I was in the house by

that time. We motored across country to Banbury and a little way beyond, along the Warwick Road. It was then that we saw signs of an approaching storm in the west, and we turned round. We passed back through Banbury.

"A few miles from Banbury the storm suddenly broke; he had a racing car with no top, and we had to seek shelter at an inn. I think the place was called Adderbury.

"He suggested supper to pass the time, and I thought it would be good fun. We went into a small dining room, and were alone, just the two of us. Before I even realized what was happening, he became drunk. I—I hadn't realized that people could be like he was. I suppose I must have screamed, and the windows facing the



"Why?" she gasped. "Didn't he—get back in time?"

road were open. Anyway, the door of the room suddenly flew open and Mr. Kandan walked in. I remember just how he looked with his big woolly overcoat all covered with drops of rain, and his hair wet and glistening."

I think her lips were trembling. Old Timberhall fidgeted uneasily.

"Kandan," she went on, "seemed to realize the whole business at once. To put it briefly—I can't dwell on it—he knocked the man down, and hurried me out to his car. The storm was at its very height then and the rain was coming down in perfect sheets, but we plunged ahead into the darkness.

"We went along for about fifteen miles, and then we suddenly stopped. He got out to examine the motor and found that water had got into the carburetor. I never felt so helpless in my life, I didn't know what to do. Presently we saw some twinkling lights in the distance, and we hurried on."

"What time was this?" Timberhall put in gently.

"About half past eleven. We ran toward those lights together, and came to another inn, the Blue Anchor."

"Why, that's miles away from Burford," I told her, "on Aylesbury road!"

She nodded quickly.

"I know it. We must have lost our way in that blackness. We had to wake people up at the inn. Kandan left me there, after ordering hot coffee, and went back to the car.

"He returned two hours later. I was frantic by that time, crying. You see, I realized what would happen if Uncle Peter ever heard of it all; he would never understand, or even try to. I would be just—done for. I explained all that to Kandan. 'Dear lady,' he said, 'please don't worry. I am going to get you safely home, and if you are able to get into your house all right, *no one else will ever know*. I promise you that.'

"It was long after three when we reached Sunbury House. Before I left him, he insisted upon knowing whether I got into the house safely, and so I arranged to signal to him. He waited there in the road while I crept up to my bedroom—they hadn't discovered my absence after all—and lighted a candle in the window. I saw him look up toward me and smile, and then his car shot away.

"Please," she begged, "oh, please—can't you get him back? Tell the whole story, anything rather than to let him suffer for his own goodness!"

It was then that Timberhall sprang his big surprise.

"It may interest you to know," he said, "that a Punjabi by the name of M. Rabaninji was arrested a few days ago in the East End of London. He was found to be involved in a plan to spread revolution throughout the Eastern world. The London police have managed to keep the business out of the newspapers because they want to get a good many more of these chaps. It might interest you to know that I was present at Rabaninji's confession. He admitted freely, among other things, that he had plotted at K. Kandan's disgrace. He stated that his motive was purely one of hatred."

"Look here," I interrupted. "If you tell the whole story in Oxford, K. Kandan will never forgive you. He'll feel that all his efforts to keep this little escapade of Miss Latham's a secret were in vain."

The old man shook his head.

"I'll tell the authorities that I know where K. Kandan was that night and nothing more. I'll assume complete responsibility for his actions.

"That's all I'll have to do, I think," he added softly. "There are some things, you see, a man need never tell."

It was strange how he unconsciously repeated K. Kandan's very words.



Some Modern Reactions

By Elizabeth Newport Hepburn

Author of "Snaring the Bluebird," "Because of Love," etc.

THERE is to-day an eighth sin, deadlier than all the other seven, and there is an adjective of supreme reproach in this absorbing, reactionary, after-war decade.

The sin is the supreme crime against all art called sentiment, and the adjective is the threadbare but priceless word "Victorian." If you do not agree as to these, then you are an old foggy and no artist; if you do, there is still hope for you, whatever be your age or your past crimes against realism.

And this despite the prevalence, quality, and moron appeal of "the movies!"

You see I have been reading W. L. George, Swinnerton, Masters, Amy Lowell, seeing the plays of St. John Ervine, and noting the change in the technique of painters and sculptors everywhere during the past five years. And wherever I go, wherever I dine, whatever I read, this truth is hammered into my aching brain: the age of sentiment is dead, the age of reason and of an omniscient and analytical art is at hand. One indispensable word is introduced by young writers into every book, every story, every conversation worth the name—the baffling and impressive word "ironic."

That, dear Old Fogies, is the thing; to see first and last the irony of life, to harp on that one note delicately but

perpetually. If you don't do this, you are antiquated and Victorian and—oh, final condemnation to nether depths—sentimental!

As Alexander Black says in a recent criticism of W. L. George's newest novel: "He means, I am sure, that no one shall ever accuse him of sentimentality," and conservatively speaking, I would suggest that at least ten million young men and women to-day desire to create precisely this impression.

After all, their attitude is inevitable. It's reaction, nothing else, against the puling sentimentalities of older generations, against the "Lucile" and "Excelsior" brand of "poetry beloved of their grandparents," against the overworked technique of Tennyson, against the pretty phrases of the past, words like "uplift" and "muckrake," phrases like "sex equality," "equality of opportunity," "brotherly love," "our friend, the kaiser," and "universal peace."

In other words, just as "the younger generation" attained majority, all the things that their parents told them "never could happen again" did happen, and with chaotic and overwhelming force. In "These Wild Young People," a paper in a recent *Atlantic* by John F. Carter, Jr., the case of the younger generation is stated convincingly and with dignity.

Looking at it from their own angle,

then, why should not young men and girls react against the teachings of their parents, against their old-time novels, their cut-and-dried wisdom, their ideas on art, their innocent conviction that rhyme and rhythm are the whole of poetry, and even their academic and archaic ideas concerning painting and sculpture?

The truth is that Youth to-day is iconoclastic and impertinent, and above all impatient of old-fogyness in general, middle age, and old age; and youth is exemplifying the folly suggested by another impressive word—the word “final.” For that’s what most of us are, convinced that we have discovered the ultimate truth, the last word. The supremacy of the classics rests on that idea alone—finality.

But I agree with the young writer that “ironic” is a good word, especially when used to suggest the relation between the generations! For the perpetual crassness of the human ego is such that each individual of each generation knows that *he* is sane and modern and the other fellow is either an old foggy or a roaring radical. Perhaps he is, yet it is still true that the progress of the world would cease if both did not exist, conservatist and radical, soft old foggy and caustic collegian. We need gallant oldsters like Howells—and miss them when they go, God knows—and young hopefuls like Fitzgerald and John F. Carter, Jr.

The truth about young people to-day and their attitude toward sentiment is this: they don't dare to value it. They have been hurt too cruelly. Grief, torment, filth, hate, and death—by these the world has been flooded for six years, and out of the damnable and seething chaos the young writer grips his precious adjective. He still bears with one other beautiful word, beautiful and not smeared with sugary sophistries: the word “emotion.” For he knows, and all artists know, that

without emotion you get no art at all and very little beauty. But to his mind emotion is wholly unrelated to sentimentality, anthologies and dictionaries to the contrary—as unrelated as W. L. George to Dickens or Masters to Tennyson or Matisse to Corot.

In the name of art and progress we may rejoice that these things are true, that reactions are inevitable, that pacifists are born of world convulsions and radicals of smooth conformity, that Tennyson did not leave a race of young Tennysons to go on smoothing down versification until all the splendid roughnesses and vigors of real poetry were lost forever. Let us be grateful for our contrasts, grateful to the radicals of a new and wiser generation, grateful for the one splendid virtue I see everywhere in modern art, modern literature, modern morals—the virtue of sincerity. For our fathers and grandfathers and we ourselves were so often specious in our reasoning, secretive as to our real convictions about life: in short, most old fogies and old-fogy morals were beyond all things hypercritical!* Witness the characters and conversation in Edith Wharton's astonishing novel, “The Age of Innocence.” For in those days we talked of purity and dealt in rottenness and ignorance. We exalted marriage, railed at divorce, yet stood for secret immorality even while we perpetually harped upon the sanctity of the home. We knew dreadful things about disease and hid them in polysyllabic medical books. We endured one law for men and another for women and called ourselves monogamists and described illegitimate children by dreadful names. We delighted in sugared and rococo art and damned all who differed from us as barbaric, unrefined. We doubted the finality of religious creeds in our secret souls, yet we held the frank infidel or agnostic in horror. If we did not actually stone him from the temple, we refused to

welcome him in the drawing-rooms, and as a result we made a virtue of conformity and created a generation of hypocrites.

These things are true; only the blatant sentimentalists will deny them, and yet we profess to be shocked by "these wild young people." Perhaps they are wild, but they are honest about it; they don't pretend, they don't meekly conform. For all their shortcomings the fabric of society to-day is shot with threads of pure gold. For men and women are more honest with each other both in fiction and in life than they used to be. They are more reckless in their speech, but, I believe, more continent in act. If there are more divorces, this is not because society as a whole is less moral, but often because decent married people demand decency in their mates instead of concealing unfaithfulness of body or spirit beneath a cloak of decorum as in by-gone years.

And these facts are reflected in our novels, our poems, our plays. The heroine has changed, the hero has changed, the villain has almost disappeared, except in the cheap melodrama and cinema. Quite charming and respectable girls smoke cigarettes, indulge in expletives, wear short skirts and scanty bathing costumes and few petticoats, but their figures and their health are superior to those of their grandmothers. When they contemplate marriage, they try—and often succeed in their effort—to know something about the habits and morals and health of their "suitors," to use a despised Victorian word. And no man likes a girl to-day because she is delicate, because she is prone to faint, because she conceals her ankles, and is proudly ignorant of sex and life. Havelock Ellis and Freud and social hygiene and athletics and education for women and ideals of service and a new brand of parent are changing the

race, changing its figure and its brain, improving its babies. Fewer shoulders slope nowadays, few women lace, few men break the moral code without at least knowing the dangers they face and which they may pass on. The millennium is a long way off, but at least we no longer shut our eyes to facts and call ignorance maiden purity, and a spade a silver spoon!

And all these things are known by our youths and maidens in their teens, known to the youngest critic, the newest novelist. Even the screen, if still inartistic, is often honest; the word virtue is rarer than it used to be, but vice no longer masks under the once accepted wild-oats tradition, and the phrase "free thinking" is no longer coupled in the public mind with reproach and dishonor.

If Stevenson were alive and writing to-day *de virginibus puerisque*, he might add a good many new lights on the eternal topic, and he would be the first to see what many older people wholly ignore, the fact that the artistic reaction against sentimentalism everywhere visible in our young folk is a sign not of weakness but of strength. The sentimentalist doesn't live through a world war; either he faces facts and becomes a realist, or repudiates them and reverts to cheap cynicism. It is the strong and the young to-day who flinch from shabby, out-worn words. They turn eagerly to free verse, to the newest novel forms, to outspoken speech, to futurist art. They have been through the fire, endured its testing agony, and pain has freed them from slavish adherence to precedent and the old sentimentalities so dear to their grandparents.

To these young people we may safely leave the renewing of the world and of the race. They are the artists and poets and parents of the future, and we need not chafe at the situation. Fresh

beauty in art and life still charms eye and mind, and reaction against frayed artistic forms and out-worn words cannot conceal the splendor of these young men and maidens in the teens and twenties, their strength of body and spirit, their healthy simplicity, their hatred of shams, their white passion for truth! Perhaps they avoid set phrases, but certainly they analyze all emotion more than was done in the past, and call passion by its right name, realizing its value, but not obsessed by its importance. And I believe that a larger, more vigorous, more enduring love is replacing the loves their par-

ents and grandparents knew. The new novels and poems and pictures will be less obvious, less romantic than the old, but perhaps more convincing to the reader of to-day and the historian of the future.

There is a rather melancholy book by Madison Grant, recently published, called "The Passing of the Great Race." Yet there are irrepressible and optimistic oldsters among us who believe, despite the terrors of war and labor, despite the deadly peril of "change," that perhaps the "great days" are not dead, nor "the Great Race" passed.



GYPSY WINE

IF you were a wandering gypsy maid
And I were your swarthy gypsy,
We'd quarrel and laugh in the oak trees' shade
And we'd sing, with love half tipsy.
From the edge of the hill where the day began,
We'd cross the earth in our caravan,
If I were your swarthy gypsy man
And you were a wandering gypsy!

Oh, your gypsy heart and its crazy beat,
And the urge and pull in my gypsy feet!
How can we stay in this quiet town
Where life's slow tides wash up and down?
When the fields are brown and the skies are blue,
And you love me and I love you!
Oh, we love to tramp the roads together,
For we can't help knowing it's gypsy weather!

By the camp-fire glow we would whisper low,
With only the wind for neighbor!
And this is our joke: to the dull town folk
We would leave all worry and labor!
But since of the town we are parcel and part,
And must smother the gypsy lure in our heart—
Still, your slow, hot kiss makes me far more tipsy
With the wine of life than the wildest gypsy!

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.

Undercurrents

A Two-part Story

By Katharine Haviland Taylor

Author of "Barbara of Baltimore," "Between Wives," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

THE STORY SO FAR:

Diana Temple has allowed herself to become engaged to Wilson Lane. Circumstances have prompted, practically forced, the engagement. Her father, an elderly school-teacher, in poor health, has needed material comforts which his future son-in-law will provide, and Wilson Lane, an aggressive, relentless lawyer, has simply determined to marry Diana because of her beauty. Although Diana shrinks from Lane's advances, she agrees to marry him. She is encouraged by her sister Julia, who holds most sophisticated, yet reassuring, views as to Lane's eligibility, and by her married brother, Herbert, who approves of the match in a theoretical, detached fashion.

After the guests have assembled at the Temple home for the wedding, Stephen Temple collapses under an attack of brain pressure. Immediate operation in the city is his one chance of life. Herbert, Diana, and Julia rush their father to the hospital, where Doctor Derrick Strong, the great brain specialist and most skillful surgeon of his kind, grudgingly agrees to perform the operation. Strong admits having no sympathy for human suffering and denies all personal interest in his patients. In his youth he was embittered by the ingratitude accorded his father, who was a poor country physician, and by that father's tragic end. Diana pleads to see her father, but is kept from him even though he regains consciousness before he dies. She hears Derrick Strong jesting about the incident to other staff surgeons, and thereafter concentrates her hatred against him.

PART II.

CHAPTER X.

BUT, baby," said Julia two weeks later, "no woman can understand business. I'm sure Wilson was very kind to old Hetty West. He said so himself."

They were in the room where Stephen Temple had slept, going over his clothes. Diana, who was holding an old vest which her father had seldom worn, yet would never give away, laid it down.

"Don't you know," she said, "I'm rather sick of Wilson's telling me how great and good he is? If it isn't true, he's a liar and I wouldn't marry him, and if it is, I certainly am not good enough for him."

Julia's expression faded from strained patience to active annoyance.

"I must say," she asserted, "that I can't understand you. What do you

expect to do? Or isn't that any of my business?" Sarcasm leaped from Julia's tone, and, although the general lack of understanding made Diana feel quite alone, a sort of humor gripped her. It was the first time she could remember when she hadn't accommodated to the family's feeling of what was proper, hadn't been swayed by them. Now that something real enough to warrant the use of her strong will had arisen, they were completely baffled.

"I expect to go to New York," Diana answered.

"New York?"

"Yes. If Frank buys the house, as you say he wants to, I'll have some money, and I'm going to New York."

"What for?"

"I'm going to take the course that Molly Llewellyn took."

"Painting?"

"And drawing. General illustration and advertising work."

"What if Wilson gives in?" asked Julia.

"He won't."

"He may."

Diana's eyes changed. They grew deep, black, and she looked down suddenly, desperately afraid that Julia might see the fright that had leaped to them.

"He loves you deeply," continued Julia.

"If he did, Julia, I'd have more courage, but he doesn't," contradicted Diana. "We'd have so little confidence in each other and a lot of that is needed, even when people's tastes are the same—as ours aren't. You see, he began to admire my looks years ago—certainly at seventeen there was not much in my mind to compel—and at that time he made up his mind to marry me. You've heard him say that he never changes his mind, always gets what he wants? Well, that's it!"

"I don't—see——" said Julia, long halts between her words.

"No, no one does. Every one thinks me inconstant and lacking in character, while, on the contrary, it is more his fault than mine. He cheated in the game all the way through; sometimes, I think, he kept other boys and men away from me so that I could more respect his admiration."

"Will you tell me," Julia went on, "exactly what happened, and what your understanding with Wilson is?"

Diana, who had been looking at a scarfpin, laid it down. Her eyes had grown moist. She remembered how she and Julia and Herbert had selected it one Christmas for their father, how, one by one, they had approached him for extra money, Diana lispingly explaining as she made her appeal that what they were buying him cost a lot. She remembered Herbert's hanging it

on the tree, how pleased her father had been, the way he had kissed them all, and had constantly taken it out of his tie to inspect it. Years ago that had been. Now it came back, that part of the tenderness of family life; absurd, very dear, intensified through loss, brought back by the little stickpin.

"I'll tell you all about it, if you like," said Diana as she turned aside from the bureau. "In the first place, Wilson didn't want me to know where he was going to build, and that was because he knew I wouldn't like what he was doing——"

"He said it was a surprise," said Julia, who was putting white piqué vest strips into a box to go to Herbert.

Diana drew a deep breath, sat down on a footstool near Julia's feet and plaited the edge of a black-bordered handkerchief before she spoke.

"It wasn't, Julia," she said; "I know it wasn't. You must believe me. He knew——" She went on at length, but it was useless. Julia would not see.

What had happened was this:

Little old Miss West came to Diana herself, shortly after Stephen Temple's funeral. Her appeal had been incoherent, but made strong instead of weak by her wanderings. She began by telling of how the little white house in which she lived had been built by her grandfather. A description of the uncle who put on the side porch came next. The green blinds, her mother's highest hope, had been gotten after long goings-without, retailed at length. Through these Diana grew into the feeling for the spot which was more than home to Hetty West, the spot which held a part of all her dead. She went on to spread out her faded skirt, to show her carefully mended silk gloves and worn shoes.

"Washing," she said; "I've taken in fine washing. And once my father owned most every house in town. I

took it in so that I could keep one, my house. If Mr. Lane will wait two more months——" She stopped and swallowed convulsively. "You wouldn't want to live there?" she queried. "To see my house go, and a fine new one put in its place? No happiness could be there"—she became a little strident—"the ghost of my house would mourn. It would! I've saved, I've almost starved. I had to mortgage it when mother was sick. I never regretted that, but if it goes——" She stopped entirely. Then, speaking quite levelly, went on with: "You know how you felt when your father was lowered into his grave. If my house goes down, it will be like that with me."

She sat before Diana, a little wreck on the beach of men's money-avid tides, trying not to cry, trying to be brave; a broken woman of sixty, frail, and almost unable to face the possibility of her last and sustaining hope going from her.

"I will talk to Mr. Lane," said Diana, who had grown very white.

"If you will! He won't listen to me."

"Have you told him what you told me?"

The small person before Diana laughed sharply.

"Told him?" she repeated. It was enough. Miss West stood up, and Diana followed her lead.

"I'll do what I can," Diana promised when they reached the hall. "I'll tell you this—I'll never live on that spot."

Her guest began to cry.

"He knows I can pay," she said; "that's the reason he wants to foreclose. The trees, the trees my grandfather—he was Matthew West—planted, they mean everything to me. I'm sorry to hurt you like this, if you love him, as you must, but that's the reason—the trees, those trees I've known and loved always, ever since I can remember, played under them with my sisters, who

are all gone—we had tea parties——" A tremendous sob silenced her and she left.

She went down the street, trying to subdue her tears, but the strain of work and anxiety and hunger which her years had held, weakened her and they would not be subdued. At the corner she met the highly successful young lawyer who had taken a mortgage on her house. He saw her, and his color changed, for he knew what had occurred. As he hurried on he said unpleasant things below his breath.

That night he opened the conversation by a long preamble about being misunderstood. He grew so heated over his theme that he was extremely sorry for himself, but Diana remained adamant. The way she looked at him even disconcerted Wilson, and he found himself shouting. Usually he did not deal in shouts; he had found that mortals are more easily swayed by all which soft smoothness may insinuate.

"Think," he implored, "of how I helped her, what my loan did to give comforts in her mother's last days. What would she have done without my money?"

"What will the poor old soul do without her house?" asked Diana in turn.

Wilson glared and grew stiff.

"She can live in great comfort on what she has saved," he informed her, his oily voice coming to the foreground. "I have thought of that, have thought of her. My course is the best for her."

"Pshaw!" said Diana. "Let's for once be honest, Wilson. We both know that hearts have to be fed as well as stomachs. That house, with the green shutters her mother wanted, and the rosebushes her Aunt Milly planted, and dear knows what not—that house is a part of her soul and your greed. I won't live there."

Wilson's lips narrowed even beyond their usual narrowness. He had culti-

vated a sneer which he often used to good effect against his adversaries, for a sneer is the meanest weapon that any man may use, and it is often hard to face; impossible to answer, if the sneered against is too much a gentleman to stoop to the gutter for his defense. He used his sneer upon Diana, because she did not agree with him and had dared to question his right.

Diana accepted it with something like a shock. She had never before tasted Wilson's complete insolence. His mirthless, silent laugh, which left his lips curled, his cold, appraising eyes, his scorn, all cut deep. She could not express what he made her feel, the complete divide which his method of disagreeing made, and so she sat silent.

When his hottest anger faded he began to plead his case anew. To every argument she turned a deaf ear, and a bad quarrel followed.

"Here," she said after an hour had gone by. She held out his ring. He ignored her dismissal.

"I will give you six months to reconsider your folly!" he boomed out.

"I won't change my mind."

"Six months," he declared again, making his the ultimatum, and making it final.

"Hetty West must have her house or you won't have me," she replied.

A cross current of greeds made Wilson's face a curious study: the appeal of the girl who stood before him glazed his eyes, his inherent craftiness and the nearing of the lot he wanted gave to him a satisfied chin set, the late struggle left at the corner of his mouth a twitching muscle.

"I can't marry you if you do this," said Diana, whose voice was beginning to shake dangerously. "Can't you see that I couldn't—because I think it all wrong? Can't you see what that shadow would do to us both?"

"You'll marry me," he responded very surely.

At that point he reached out, drew her close, and, tilting her head back against his shoulder, looked down at her.

"You'll come," he prophesied, "to accepting all my judgments—happily——"

She shook her head vehemently.

"Not this, Wilson," she disagreed. "Not this, I *couldn't*."

His face, which had begun to soften, grew hard. Anger at her soared, but it did not keep him from kissing her, growing breathless as he kissed her.

"And so," said Diana, as she finished the much deleted story of this affair, "and so, Julia, he left. He says he won't change, and that I will marry him—but I won't unless he gives in. The matter rests there."

Julia did not look sympathetic and, when Diana laughed suddenly, her feeling asserted itself in a cool, short:

"What amuses you?"

"His knees," answered Diana. "His legs are always so stiff when he's angry. When he's going to the left they look like a right-hand parenthesis. They sort of sink backward. I watched him go across the street as he went home."

Without response Julia got up and left the room.

Alone, Diana laughed for a minute more, and then suddenly she began to sob. She grew weak and slipped down on the bed to hide her face in the vest which her father had seldom worn and yet would never give away. After an interval her groping hands closed on the cuff of an old, frayed house coat. A bitter smell of tobacco arose from this. She sat up, the move making her hot head throb.

"If he had cared," she said, "you might be alive, father—if he had cared——"

Julia, who had appeared in the doorway, spoke.

"What?" she asked. Diana ex-



"You can't expect thanks," said Dean's rescuer. "I'll look you over soon. I'm sort of a doctor."

plained, and as she did Julia's chin dropped.

"Really, Di," she said, "you must try to get a grip on yourself. Don't you *know* you must?"

She came in, settled by her sister, covered Diana's hot hands with hers.

"Dear," she went on, "don't you know you aren't reasonable? Doctor Strong did his best——"

Diana shook her head, started to speak, to explain further, stopped; there was no use, no one ever understood. They were all against her about

Wilson and would be about this. She pushed back her ruffled hair, hunted a handkerchief.

"Never mind——" she whispered, "only—don't talk about it."

"Well, I won't, dear. But you mustn't think of it! Poor child, your head's so hot. Better go bathe your eyes, honey."

"I will."

Diana struggled up, started toward the door. As she reached the hall she paused, turned back.

"Julia," she said, her voice dangerous in its uneven intensity, "you've been so good to me——"

"Oh, dear child!"

"Yes, you've been wonderful—staying with me like this. But, Julia——"

"Dear?"

"I can't marry Wilson unless he does let Miss Hetty have her old house. I can't—can't forget her saying that about father's grave."

"Honey, you must get a grip on yourself!"

"I will. But—but, Julia, I can't marry Wilson until he fixes that, and it was true about Doctor Strong, Julia. It *was*——" She began to twist her hands, and her face worked.

"Now, dearie," said Julia.

"All right. I'll—I'll be good."

"Go wash your eyes."

"I will—but, Julia, it was true—if he had *cared*——"

Wisely Julia piloted her toward the bathroom. Here she turned on the cold water and began to bathe her sister's face and wrists. She talked lightly as she did this; of the funny thing Mrs. Hotchkiss had said on their meeting that morning, of Viola's latest painting, which was a sunset of so modern a turn that one took it for an omelet; and of Corinne's plea for long skirts; finishing with, "And some day all this quarrel of yours with Wilson will seem a joke! I'll come back to visit you in your dear little house, and some little

people will be calling me 'Aunt Julia,' and everything will be so happy——"

Diana looked at her dully.

"Thank you, Julia," she said after her hands had been patted dry. Then she stood up and spoke of going to her room to rest.

"Get a little nap," counseled Julia. "Happy dreams!"

"Thank you, Julia," Diana said again. Still lifeless, dull.

"I quite diverted her," said Julia as she joined Herbert on the lower floor. "She is troublesome. School go well to-day, Herbert? I'm glad. Diana wants you all to come to dinner tomorrow. As I said, she's troublesome. Very nervous and touchy. I don't know why she should be, we all feel this equally."

"Well, she was here with father, with him all the time," put in Herbert, "and we have families. Leaves her more alone, doesn't it?"

"Yes, but she has Wilson."

"Yes, she has Wilson," Herbert replied in his echo method. He fumbled round to find a soda-mint tablet, and as he sucked and munched at this Julia continued the tales of her managings.

"I do my best," she said with a little move of her shoulders which was a reflection of mental satisfaction; "but it is hard. I'm going to advise Wilson not to oppose her going to New York. The change will do her good. I say what I can to make her realize what lies ahead of her in happiness, how the avenue will widen. This afternoon I said, 'You'll be happy, dear. Some day I'll visit you in your own little home and a lot of small people will be calling me 'Aunt Julia.' I thought it might make her think—realize——"

"Yes, make her realize," said Herbert. "How did she accept it?"

"She stopped crying immediately,

and didn't say another word. She went up to the third floor so slowly, simply dragged. I knew I had made her think."

Herbert nodded solemnly.

"I spoke to her of the beauties of motherhood myself," said Herbert, who, on touching realities, always looked somewhat like an owl. "I explained them fully, fully, but she grew hysterical. She apologized for laughing, but said she couldn't help it. I'll confess that I was both baffled and hurt."

"She simply isn't herself!" said Julia. "We'll have to be very patient."

CHAPTER XI.

Diana's New York idea met slight opposition.

"A few weeks," reflected Wilson, "and she'll be glad to come back." He was almost amused about it, and since the matter of the transfer of Hetty West's property had come to light, he felt that some outside influence was necessary to his and, very secondarily, to Diana's, peace. "Let her go daub," he said. "She'll get tired of it."

His doubts about holding her had faded, for his nature was incapable of sustaining anything which depreciated his attractions.

"She's not serious," he vowed many times—most of these as he stood before his mirror—"she'll come 'round!"

Julia complimented him in telling him that he was wise to allow Diana to have her fling.

"At first," she confided, "I hoped she would marry you immediately, but that was before she got this queer notion about Miss Hetty's place. Now I think with you that a new interest would soothe and help her to come to herself. You know Dean, my second son, is there at school. I'll ask him to keep an eye on her."

"Good idea," said Wilson. He re-

alized that Julia's stepson was old enough to guard, and he skillfully planted in Julia's mind the idea that minute reports, as to Diana's friends, life, and well-being, would be good to have.

"How he cares!" thought Julia. "What a shame, but she'll come around!"

And so, Diana, rather amazed at the peace in which she was allowed to make her good-bys, departed. In New York, through a friend, she found a room where cooking was permitted, made arrangements for classes, and began her study. She was lonely, but busy, and less full of the horror of what had occurred than she had been at home.

The repeated "Hasn't Dean been to see you?" in Julia's letters made her wonder at his omission, and so, when the friendship started, her tone was so casual that it relieved all his fears, and they quickly became great friends.

He had been afraid that she would impose on him, be very old, and, like his stepmother, talk endlessly of little things, such as the cook's lacks, how the laundry took off buttons, and the cost of foods. Therefore a sharp note from the woman who had never, in spite of her close association, come to know him, made him both impatient and angry. He knew from its tone that he would have to call on his aunt soon, that he could not put it off any longer. Julia wrote:

We asked you to be nice to her, but she says you haven't called. She's lonely, of course, and needs diversion. I also wanted and want you to let me know everything that she does, the sort of friends she makes, and so on.

"Not any!" muttered Dean with something which approached a sneer on his face. He read on:

I very much wish that you had been in New York during the time of father's sickness and death. You were needed. Never

go off without leaving your address again. I am rarely so definite, but in this—

Dean tossed the letter to a table and went to sit by a window. Here he sprawled at great and slim length and smoked moodily. He tried to recall Diana as she had looked when his father married her sister, but that had happened so long before—he had been such a kid, so much had been going on—that Diana was only a hazy part of his great, small-boy excitement. Oddly enough they had not met since then. Dean had been at summer camps on the two occasions when Diana had visited her sister in Vermont, and when his stepmother's father was hurried to New York for the futile effort to save him, Dean was off in the woods. He had gone at the invitation of a host who had not appeared. The whole thing had been queer, and quite to Dean's liking.

It happened in this way. Dean had played the hero in dragging a child from the path of an approaching motor. It was in a dense congestion; he had been thrown down, but had gotten off with nothing more serious than bruises. The mother became hysterical, and her weeping and laughing quite absorbed the quickly gathered crowd; Dean was left, mud-stained and dazed, standing alone. He had not wanted appreciation, but his state and hesitation made him feel foolish. His moves and what he did or did not assumed gigantic proportions because he was but nineteen. He realized that a jaunty walk off would have been the dignified thing, after he had, with the rest of the gazers, hung around the edges of the crowd for a little time.

"Knocked down?" he heard.

"Yes," he answered, his voice a little shaken.

"Well, come on," invited the stranger; "I'll fix you up."

He felt the man's hand on his arm, himself gently propelled through the

crowd, which was now straining to hear the questions which were being asked by a thickset policeman.

"You can't expect thanks," said Dean's rescuer, who was even taller than Dean.

"Oh, I didn't. Didn't want 'em."

"Yes, you wanted them," disagreed the older man; "everybody does. You hope for them. It's one of the things, that lack, that makes the world squeak as it turns. Hurt?"

"I don't think so. My arm aches, but not badly."

"Well, I'll look you over soon. I'm sort of a doctor."

He stepped to the curb after his words, signaled a taxi, and without noticing Dean's half-hearted, "Don't bother, I'll go along," brusquely ordered him in. When they were inside and leaning back, Dean's unnamed friend opened his cigarette case—Dean noticed it particularly because it was "a peach"—offered Dean one, took one himself, and they smoked in silence. Dean was wondering whether the man was right about people in general being thankless—at that moment the mother of the rescued was making a futile search for the boy who had saved her baby—and the man was wondering whether he had been cruel in planting the seed of his sight in the eyes of a boy, whether every one must learn to know the world as it was and whether, on learning it, it would hurt as it had hurt him.

"Here we are," he said as the taxi slowed before a widely known club. They went up the steps and in, and soon Dean had been looked over, pronounced all right, and advised as to the treatment of a slight skin break. When he was about to depart he was detained. After he finished his thank you, which was real and intense, he looked up. The amusement in the eyes of the man before him was disconcerting.

"I fixed it so you had to have seven spasms over this, didn't I?" asked the "sort of doctor."

"I am grateful," said Dean with some dignity; "I said what I felt, nothing else."

"All right—all right."

"That's a wonderful painting," commented Dean. They were in the lounge and his roving gaze had focused upon a canvas in which was a rolling hill, pines, and much sunlight. "I get so crazy to get out of doors that when I see a thing like that——" He paused expressively.

"Have lunch with me," invited the older man. His invitation sounded more like an order. It made Dean think that the man was used to issuing them. He wondered about it, for the individual of his chance encounter compelled interest. A high magnetism radiated from him in spite of the fact that he often accepted remarks as if they were insincere, especially those which held gratitude; his aloofness, coldness, intensified rather than dimmed his appeal.

They ate together, talked intermittently. Dean was not afraid of silences; the man with whom he lunched evidently liked them. Then Dean received another invitation.

"Look here," he heard; "that painting in the hall was done from my cabin steps—too big for my rooms, so I let 'em have it here. You say you like outdoors and you know how to be quiet. I get awfully sick of talk. Maybe you do, too. Why don't you go up there Saturday and Sunday?"

"I could start Friday afternoon."

"All right. Go to it. I expect to get up there myself—like the fall—but I can't tell; sometimes I can't get away. Anyway, you could go if you really want to and meant that stuff you said about outdoors. I'll write the farmer who cares for the place, and if I don't turn up, he'll give you the keys."

As they wandered toward the big doors which opened on the street, Dean got his directions about reaching the cabin, heard that there was food in the place, something about the mountain climbs. It was only when he was outside that he realized he didn't know his host's name. It amused and interested him.

He started for the place on the Friday Stephen Temple was stricken, and so missed seeing Diana Temple. And now, two months later, she was in town and he'd have to go to call on her at least once a month or there would be a row. He couldn't talk to any sort of girl, let alone the kind who would be the sister of his stepmother.

He got out of his chair, hunted Diana's address, decided that he might as well get it over. All the way uptown he composed elaborate and somewhat frosty welcoming sentences. When he saw her he forgot them all. She was quite incased in a light-blue checked apron which bore testimony to the fact that she cooked and painted. Something which smelled like dinner, and a good one, sizzled in the adjoining cupboard which the janitor called a kitchen.

"Are you Dean Martin?" asked Diana.

"Yes."

"So good of you to come to see me. I'm glad to see you, but I can't stop; I'm frying oysters. Will you stay for dinner?"

Dean heard himself say that he would.

"Then put your coat somewhere," called Diana; "I don't know just where you can put it, and come in here. I'll fix a corner where you can roost."

Her matter-of-factness dispelled his embarrassment and evaporated all his fears about her pursuing him. He forgot his feeling that she might impose, forgot that he couldn't talk to girls. The fact that he didn't want to faded.



"What's the *matter* with you? You wouldn't hurt a fine man, a man like Derrick, that way. You—you aren't that sort!"

She was like a man pal, only nicer, much nicer. He began, as the evening passed, to realize he had been lonely, and in all of his nineteen years he had never known it before.

"I think you're an awfully nice girl,"

he said awkwardly as he was about to leave. She tightened the grip of her hand, which was in his.

"You're engaged, aren't you?" he went on.

"Partially," she answered with a lit-

tle laugh. "That is," she explained, "some one can have me if he wants me badly enough."

"I think he's lucky!"

"You've only known me one evening," she replied, but she laughed delightedly.

"I suppose that does sound funny," he admitted, smiling with her.

"Funny and pleasant," she responded. "Most people haven't felt that way. My fault, I suppose, but every one's disapproved of me lately." Hearing her say that seemed too good to be true, for it put her into his pack. He did not always get on well at home.

He squeezed her hand so tremendously that a tiny ring cut into her fingers, and then, with a gruff "So long," hurried down the dusty stairs. She heard him whistling, then the slam of the street door.

"What a dear youngster!" she thought. "I do hope he'll like me. I'd like to be friends." She hummed as she thought of the tall, gawky boy of abrupt manner, the way he peered at her through thick-lensed, nearsighted glasses. She felt closer to peace than she had in a good many weeks, farther from loneliness.

She slept without thinking of Derrick Strong and of what he had kept from her. And she dreamed of her father, not as he had looked during his long unconsciousness, but as he had looked when he saw her in her wedding things, ready for—the prince.

CHAPTER XII.

The cross-currents in Derrick Strong made him do curiously contradictory things. The cruel example of dying affections which he had seen made him doubt the possibility of their living through fire. He doubted the possibility of entire loyalty, while a knowledge of rough going and of the steepness of some hills made him do sundry

kindnesses which sprouted strangely from the soil of his creed. He talked loudly of helping no one, as he shamefacedly helped any one who needed help; talked loudly of feeling no soft sentiment toward anything on earth, yet when he confronted Diana Temple, and remembered his father's caring for her, he could not speak.

In every one there are conflicting cross-currents, but in those whose true natures have been outraged to hiding do we see them most. When tales of Derrick Strong's support of an old country physician reached his friends they, for the better part, exclaimed, "Don't believe it," or "Not like Strong." But it was like him, it was he. What those whom he met saw was the hard coating which hurt had put upon him. And they, unthinkingly, accepted the surface for the depth.

His first encounter with Diana had been fugitively sought. The rest he made frankly, and for almost one week he thought he made them because she linked him with one touch of his father. Then suddenly, blindly, he knew that he loved her not solely because she had been held close in John McCarthy's arms, not because she had been loved by him and had loved his father, but because she was the woman who should be his. He was very sure of it, so very sure that he had to keep saying:

"Only a week—two weeks—she'd think me mad! I mustn't let her guess!"

And he was quite mad, but beautifully so; so beautifully mad that he allowed his softer side full sway, did his kindnesses without hiding them, began to think the world a good place, felt less soreness in the scar it had left upon him.

It had been precipitate and it had happened in this way. One afternoon Dean heard a call as he swung into a small court of the building where he

roomed. Turning, he saw in a smart little motor the man who had given him the use of his cabin back in the fall.

"Sorry not to get up that day," said Derrick Strong as Dean stepped to the curb. "But I couldn't. I was kept here."

"The farmer said he supposed you had operations," said Dean, who had heard many things from a rustic worshiper.

"I had. Live here?"

"Yes. My room's to the right."

"Doesn't look like New York," said Derrick Strong. "More like London. A few spots have stayed old, haven't they?" As he stopped speaking, a spatter of sharp rain made him hold out a hand and look up in the lead-gray sky.

"Come up to my place, will you?" asked Dean. His invitation was given flatteringly, for the fact that Derrick Strong was a very great person suddenly turned his rooms shabby and humble. "I'd awfully like having you," he added, "although my place isn't much."

The loveliness in Dean Martin which had appealed to Diana made its appeal also to Derrick. He got out quickly.

"I'd like it," he said. "Had a hard day and I'm hot and tired. Guess I oughtn't to get soaked. Sure you aren't busy?"

"Oh, no!" answered Dean.

Together they swung up the street and into one of the dark, old houses. Inside this they went up two flights and into the room where books strewn across a table showed recent study. A photograph of a girl stood on the mantel, and its presence did more than make the onlooker forget the hideously wrought curves of that piece of furniture and the peeling paint. It quite dominated the room.

"How genuine looking she is!" said

Derrick warmly. He supposed he was looking on his young friend's inamorata.

"You bet she is!" answered Dean. "She—she's wonderful. And talented, too. Just to-day she sold a picture to the Zaner Company for one of their ads, and she's only been working here a month. It was a dandy landscape, and after she got through with it she stuck in a car, and they grabbed it. It was nicer without the car, but you see she's got to live."

"Going to marry her some day?" asked Derrick, who was still looking at Diana in sepiæ.

"Marry her!" repeated Dean. He laughed loudly. "Why, look here," he explained, after he had somewhat sobered, "she's my aunt! Seems funny, but she's older than she looks. When we go places together, and we do quite a lot, for she's lonely. I call her 'Aunt Diana' just to make people look. It does sound funny——"

"Diana," said Derrick; "years ago I knew a Diana. Pretty name."

"Yes, isn't it? Sit down by the window, won't you? In the red chair; the other one's busted; the springs go so dog-gone quick. Diana Temple's her name. I think it's pretty."

Derrick Strong ignored the advice about chairs and went over to stand before the photograph. While there he pretended absorption in the loading of a short-stemmed pipe. But, in reality, he was seeing through a much changed link a man who loved little children.

He saw them as they ran toward him, heard their ecstatic howls, and saw the circle close around the tall, shabby man. He saw the case set down and a little sunny-haired person lifted high, and her arms close around his neck. All over again he suffered the iron-heavy impression that at those times settled over his lungs; he, a man in the thirties, felt his small-boy jeal-

ousy. Then that faded and he found himself wanting to see Diana, to touch her hands. He could see them patting his father's cheeks, and, seeing them, his eyes smarted.

"Where did your aunt live?" he heard himself ask.

Dean told him, and as Derrick heard his heart contracted. It was she, the little girl his father had so dearly loved.

"Going to be here for the winter?" he questioned.

"Oh, for a good while, I guess," answered Dean.

"I see. Well—" Derrick Strong turned away from the mantel, went to settle by the window, from which spot he talked ingratiatingly. Before an hour passed he had won every thread of Dean's confidence. When he at length stood up to go his "When do we meet again, Dean?" was entirely welcome.

"You want to?" asked Dean.

"Of course I want to." Unconsciously his eyes moved to the photograph after he spoke. However, Dean didn't see them. "I'd like to see you often," he added. "I think we could be good friends." He meant it. He was drawn to the rather awkward, strange boy, whose response to his approaches shamed Derrick. The warmth of it made him assure himself that he did like Dean, that he would have been decent to the youngster in any case; but deep inside he knew that it was Diana Temple's touch with John McCarthy which lured.

He thought of her so much, of the way she had tagged after his father, adored him, worshiped him. When they met, the past made a barrier between his will and his words. He couldn't speak, and Dean, looking on, was amazed and pleased. It seemed too wonderful that other men should be afraid of women, too, especially men like Derrick.

Diana saved the situation. She talked glibly. She was, perhaps, a trifle too gay, but in spite of this, which was to Dean an artificiality, Derrick liked her. Dean knew that. It showed in the way Derrick listened to everything she said, looked at her when she was not looking.

"Gee," he thought, "wouldn't that be wonderful!"

But at that time it seemed only a very improbable, hazy dream.

The first meeting was on the Drive. Derrick heard that they sometimes walked there and, after the seemingly chance encounter, he took to wandering with them each afternoon he was free. The way the little Diana had looked as she tagged after John McCarthy began to fade, while the look of her face as she laughed at something Dean said, or hotly disagreed about some question of art, took its place.

One day toward the close of a long, new-aimed, exploring walk it began to mist, and they stopped in a queer, dark little place for tea. Dean became interested in the wall decorations, which had been done by sundry visitors, and he abandoned Diana and Derrick to walk around and inspect as he waited.

The place was only half lit, full of shadows. The darkness of a chimney corner backed Diana while a shaded candle softly illuminated her face. Suddenly, almost overpoweringly, Derrick found something very beautiful in being alone with her. It made him want to reach across the table, cover her hands with his, whisper:

"Dear, do you like this half as much as I do?"

But he had known her only two weeks, and so, somewhat shortly, he asked if he might smoke.

"Do," she answered, "I like it."

"You don't?"

"No, I'm too provincial."

"I'm glad," he said.

He found her eyes fixed on him appraisingly, became aware of the hostility which he felt in her without its expression. Miserably he wondered how he had erred, what false note he had unwittingly struck. The other time that he had sensed her drawing away was one afternoon when Dean asked him why he had decided to be a brain specialist. He had answered flippantly, saying that he had always liked to mend alarm clocks, watch the wheels go 'round. He went on to intimate that he didn't always get all the screws back, but that he judged the average human was about as opaque without as with them. Then her silence struck in, and he was chilled by it.

"I like the old family doctor," she said suddenly, coldly.

"It doesn't pay to be one," answered Derrick, instantly sobered. He was thinking of one return, she of another.

"Money is not everything," she asserted.

"True, I meant——" He stopped, unable to explain.

"Nor fame," she continued. "I like best the old kind who loved their patients and did everything for them. You—you won't even hear the names of your patients, will you?"

"No," he responded.

Dean, who was growing embarrassed, tried to divert the trend of the talk and failed. After an inane remark or two, he, too, grew quiet, fuming inside at Diana, who had "spoiled everything."

Diana was triumphant, but not happy.

"I dared to intimate that he lacked," she mused. "It touched his conceit, his colossal conceit."

She had to make such assertions often, for even then her heart and her will were beginning to battle.

Now, to-day she looked across the

tiny table and allowed herself, drove herself, to resent his personal remark about her not smoking. What she did and did not do should not matter to him. He would learn that she was not like the rest—she supposed that there had been a lot of them—that she would not fall down to worship. It would be a game with her, too. She wondered whether it was all a game with him. The tight sensation closed around her heart, settled. She shut her eyes.

"Tired?" she heard.

She opened her eyes, and the light in them was soft. She could not help it.

"You are," he said, as if her tiredness mattered more than anything else in the world. "You've been doing too much."

"No, I didn't sleep well last night."

"You don't take anything?" he asked anxiously, for his was the hard aversion to drugs which belongs to most physicians.

"No. I only lie awake and—think."

He wondered what she thought of, longed to ask her. Again he felt the wall so often between them, the wall she put between them. He longed to cry, "Don't put it there! Don't put it there! I love you, but if you knew how much you'd forgive me for anything I may have done that you don't like." But because he had known her only two weeks, he kept silent. And because his hands wanted—wanted so much to reach toward her—cover hers, he lit another cigarette.

Dean called from an adjoining room: "Something here you ought to see, Diana."

She answered him quietly:

"Later. I'm lazy, Dean."

"Did we let you walk too far?" asked Derrick.

She shook her head. He couldn't make her eyes meet his. He had never felt anything like the paradox of ecstasy and misery which her little cruelties loosed.

"I'm a stupid fool," he said abruptly. "When I say—and do things you don't like, I don't mean to. I—I want you to like me, if you possibly can. I want you to—very much."

He was enraged with himself because his voice had grown husky.

"Frighten her," he thought, "and spoil the whole thing. Make it twice as hard—"

A waitress drew near with a tray, set it down, began to take from it the tea things. He watched Diana pour, forgot that she hadn't answered him, forgot everything save her presence, the dear intimacy of the tiny table and the emotion that her swiftly moving hands put within him. He wanted to hold these against his face and eyes, to say, "I am not fit for you, but I love you, I love you! God alone knows how much. I will never be able to tell you!"

"Will you call Dean?" he heard.

"I——" he answered stupidly. Then, "Yes."

He got up. The sweetness which had been captured in the short moments had left him stifled. He wasn't sure about commanding his voice.

"I hope he isn't bored," thought Dean as they drank their tea. "He's so quiet. And Di, too. Why doesn't she talk? She can!"

"You aren't eating anything," he said to Derrick. "Aren't you hungry?"

"Had a late lunch. They say there's an attractive little inn up the Larchway Road. I thought—I wondered—would you care to go up there for dinner—to-morrow night?"

"You bet!" said Dean.

"You?" he asked of Diana.

"I think it would be very nice," she answered primly.

"You must dress heavily," he said. "It's pretty late for this sort of gadding. This wouldn't do"—he put his hand on the cuff of her coat; because

he could not help it, he let it linger—"not nearly heavy enough."

"But it's the only one I have. There's more warmth in it than there seems."

"I'll bring one of mine. You wouldn't mind wearing it? It'll be cold coming home."

She had arisen to fasten her wraps. Touching her fur as he put it around her shoulders, brushing her hand against his made him aware of all the great reality of that which had come to live within him. "True," he reflected, "true; more so than I dreamed—ever dreamed—it could be."

That night he considered telling her about his father, and shrank from it. If she did not understand, know with him, the right about his father, he did not know what he would do. The haziest possibility of this was more than he could bear to face. He would tell it all at once, he decided, first the story of a man who did wrong unconsciously, and then the story of his, Derrick's, love for her. And if—and if—

Coherent fancy faded in a medley of emotion that the dream of her being kind produced.

"Just half a chance," he thought; "if she'd say I had just half a chance with her!" He got up to wander over by the window. "She'll have her opportunity to say what she likes pretty soon," he said below his breath, "for it'll come out—come out, whether I want it to or not."

CHAPTER XIII.

The month which took the calendar into the Christmas season sped quickly past. Diana went home with Dean for the holidays, and here, tramping the Vermont hills, away from Derrick Strong, she considered what had come to pass, what she had allowed to be. For she knew that he cared, and from the first had put no check upon his

caring. Rather she had encouraged it, although she had successfully evaded hearing him say so.

When Dean first told her of his unusual invitation, his accepting it, and the identity of his almost host, she heard, with his name, her father's cry. It turned her sick and white.

"What is it, Diana?" asked Dean, a steady arm under hers.

"Nothing," she answered, but her voice was weak.

"He operated on grand-father?"

"Yes."

Dean tightened his fingers around her arm. He was too young to touch that particular tragedy easily. He wanted to tell her that he was sorry, but death loomed too large a thing for any of his words to fit.

"You had the best, anyway," he said awkwardly.

She didn't speak. For at that moment it all came back, and when it came back she was inarticulate. The need for her father, the loneliness and want for him, the sleepless, tear-soaked nights, the dull, plodding days, she was sure had come to her through Derrick Strong. He stood out in her unbalanced, nerve-sick mind, a murderer. He had not cared. One person more or less did not matter. It was applause he wanted, applause for his brilliant work, as well as for his stories. He had gotten the latter that day when he told of Doctor Anshuntz's request that she might be permitted to see her father "so that she may say good-by before he go." Derrick Strong had imitated the older

doctor's voice well, and he had had his applause. The laughter that had risen, in the room in which the doctors washed up before and after their work, still came to Diana in gusts.

"Dean," she said that day, a windy, late-fall day, and only the week before Dean's reopened acquaintance with Derrick Strong, "Dean, I should like to meet Doctor Strong, but not to have him know who I am, nor what he did—what—" She faltered, stopped.



"All right," answered Dean. "Look here, dear, you look done. We'll sit down."

She sank down on a bench and he put an arm around her shoulders. He was so exceedingly concerned over her that his first "dear" and the position of his arm didn't trouble him at all.

"My head aches so," she whispered. "I get so sick when I think of it."

"You aren't going to faint, are you?" he asked.

The alarm he revealed took her out of herself and, as she sat erect and tried to smile, she reassured him.

"It's—all right."

"Sure? You looked fierce, Di!"

"Really—I'm quite myself now, Dean."

"Well, I think you oughta be careful of yourself, and not get too tired. Why, you looked awfully!"

She stood up and began to walk. He followed, accommo-

dating his pace to hers, caring for and protecting her; seeing her in the full force of her weakness fixed in him a

feeling for her which was never to die. "We're going to have a great time this winter," he said. "You just wait! We'll have fine times. You're the best girl to pal with——" She didn't an-



She was leaning against his bureau, looking after him. Her pose so indelibly impressed him that long after he saw its phantom hundreds, thousands, of times.

dating his pace to hers, caring for and protecting her; seeing her in the full force of her weakness fixed in him a

swer, and he, leaning down, saw that she was crying. For the fraction of a second she hid her face against his

upper arm—her head didn't reach his shoulder—then, drawing away, promised sanity.

"I'm so sorry to act like this," she said.

"Oh, Aunt Di! It's all right. I'm only awfully sorry for you!"

"You're a dear, Dean."

"You know how I feel about you. I did right away, Diana. I always do know when I'm going to like people. I like you better than any one I ever met. I did right away, and Doctor Strong next—"

She laughed suddenly, strangely; then grew silent, and she didn't cry again.

Now, five days after Christmas, she wandered a mountain path, and thought of all the things that had been since her meeting with the man whom she'd planned to hurt. The deepest, truest side of her could not hate him, even though she always saw, through him, her pain; because of him, its reason. A letter from him that morning was in her coat pocket, and at the foot of a tall, gently tolerant pine, she paused to read it again.

DEAR DIANA: I hope you won't mind my calling you that. I've wanted to ask you whether I might, for a long time, because I always think of you that way—

What a boy he was, she mused. His incoherence made her tender in spite of herself, made her, through every firm resolve, long to draw his head to her shoulder, hold it tight pressed there.

It's been lonely. I've been busy, but not too busy to miss you all the time. I suppose you'd laugh at the millions of times I think of you, but I hope not. When you come back will you be good to me, very good to me, and let me talk to you alone? For I must pretty soon, Diana. I—but what's the use? I guess you know how I feel, how I have felt right along. I can't help showing it.

She stopped reading, looked down at the valley which opened below her. The tranquillity of the last day or two

was entirely gone. Two elements battled within her, two currents crossed. She was beaten, weakened, beneath them. In a queer way she felt that it would be a disloyalty to her father to own that she was touched. Her will, the shock that had made it meanly strong, led her to say "I hate him!" The valley took it, tossed it back, and she began to shake.

Breathing quickly, she went on with her reading, although the page she held was so unsteady that the words danced and blurred.

Sometimes I think you think I'm hard. I don't mean to be, and I have been much less so since I met you. I think, if you'd help me, I could go a good deal farther, could be much more decent. It has been a long time since I have had any one to love very much, or since any one has loved me. I did not think I needed it, but I do. God only knows how I do, and how I know it now. I didn't mean to write like this, and I hope you'll forgive me.

I'll be the happiest man in the world when I see you again. I don't believe that you will ever know—could realize—what just seeing you means to me, how all my life has changed since you came into it. I didn't know anybody could feel like this.

She looked at one more sentence of three words; his name; crumpled the letter. Then she smoothed it out, suddenly held it close to her. The tenderness of her hands as they erased the traces of her quick anger, the unconsciousness with which she had pressed it against her breast, came from her inner being. All her intentions became fluid under imaginings.

Suppose, she thought, eyes half closed, that she could love him, that she did not know what he was, had not seen and learned to know him as he was? Then she could love him, let him care. And she'd live in those rooms of his where one day she had gone with Dean to tea, could sit at that piano playing soft little tunes as he leaned over it, looking at her. And when he came in she could put her arms around his

neck and say, "Have you had a hard day?" or, "Dear, are you tired?" And if he was, perhaps he would sit down in the very big chair that stood before the fire and let her baby him. He was so big that it would seem foolish, but she wanted to—*wanted* to. "And probably," she mused, "if he were tired, he wouldn't mind, and sometimes he must be tired."

Then in his room—she'd gone there to lay aside her hat, which was tight and hurt her head—her brushes would crowd aside military ones, and her own bottles and jars and boxes would change the look of things. Perhaps she would have a dressing table between the windows. And he would say, "You have the most wonderful hair!" She wanted him to say that, and that her skin was soft and dear to his caress. She had hated that from Wilson, but she wanted Derrick to love all of her, the seen and the unseen, her body with her soul.

"He never said I was pretty," she whispered, and then she came to herself, moved suddenly, grew rigid under the shock of what she encountered after the sweetness and gentleness of dreams. But her "I hate him!" changed to an "I *must* hate him!" and she sobbed after she said it.

That evening Julia amazed her son by a revelation.

"How about Wilson?" she asked over a napkin which she was hemming. "You say he's written that he's coming to talk things over with you in January?"

"Yes," Diana answered.

"Probably he'll give in," said Julia, "which is more than you deserve, if you'll pardon my frankness, Di. Neither Frank nor I could understand your attitude."

Her husband, who had started his evening's snores—begun behind a newspaper, which lowered as their velocity

increased—stirred uneasily as she used his name.

"We," continued Julia, "agree that women shouldn't bother about business. You know, dear, they can't understand it, and there's no use of their trying to, and don't you think it makes them less appealing when they do? I think it coarsens them. This stuff is so stiff that it's miserable to hem! And so if he does come, I wouldn't bother my little head about the matter, if I were you, dearie, and I'd give in if he doesn't."

Diana didn't reply at once.

"I promised him," she said at length, and wonderingly, "I promised him I would marry him if he came around to my way of thinking, didn't I?" She laughed suddenly, and her brother-in-law registered the fact that he was disturbed by a little impatient stirring.

Julia whispered a caution about noise, and then, after answering Diana's question with the affirmative, went off to write a note. Dean's hand closed on Diana's wrist and he pulled her up.

"Come in here," he said roughly. She followed him to the adjoining room, where he spoke after he had closed the door. "What the hell did mother mean?" he asked. "I thought that Lane business was all off. You let me think so—that day when I told you that Derrick was caring too much—what—what do you *mean* by it?"

His anger bolstered her waning inclinations.

"Why do you consider it your matter?" she inquired crisply.

"Because I care for both of you. And he cares, Di, you know he does. You know, you must have seen. He can't look at anything else. What's the *matter* with you? You wouldn't hurt a fine man, a man like Derrick, that way! You—you aren't that sort!"

His stammering, his angry questions turned her first hot, then cold. Hearing Derrick's name, hearing him cham-

pioned, so quickened her heart beat that it almost made her sick. "I——" she said, paused, moistened her lips. "Trust me a little longer, Dean, dear! Please do! It will be all right. I'll only give to Derrick Strong what he—deserves."

She felt her hand gripped, pressed hard between Dean's.

"If that's true——"

"It is. It is, Dean. Some day I'll explain."

"I trust you," he said, "more than I ever have any one except Derrick. I know you wouldn't do anything like that. I'm sorry I went off my head, but it seemed queer—and awful! I thought that perhaps you didn't quite realize how serious it is with him—how deep it's gone. He—he talks to me quite a lot about you, because he can't help it, I suppose. I can see he likes to say your name. I guess that sort of stuff goes along with being in love. Course I don't know anything about it, but it looks that way. And he certainly does like you! My gosh, Di, it's fierce the way he likes you!"

"You think he does?" she asked in an undertone. "You *do*?"

He put an arm around her. She was pathetically unsure, wonderfully appealing as she asked her question. As he tightened his arm he felt her tremble.

"Upset you, hasn't it?" he asked tenderly.

She nodded.

"And you like him, too. I know you do."

She looked up, tried to speak, failed. Then she loosened his arms, avoided his detaining hand, and hurried off and up the stairs. After she locked her door she sank down by her window, hiding her face in her arms. Self-scorn, self-hate raged. Her change was to her a weakness of flesh and not the divinely right answer. His changes

were insincerities and not the echoes of him.

"I'll have it over when I get back," she promised. "We'll have—our talk then——"

CHAPTER XIV.

But they did not for over a week. She was unable to face it, and so she kept Dean close. Each time she decided that she would have it over courage waned, and she would cling to the forbidden fruit, tasting with its bitterness the great sweetness that would seep through.

They got back to New York late one night in very early January, and when she saw Derrick waiting, her heart contracted as if great fingers were squeezing it. She was unable to speak immediately, and could only cling to his hand. The touch of her quite broke his restraint and loosed from him with dynamic force an astoundingly loud, "Dear!" After he said it they both became conscious and Dean grinned widely.

Very arrogantly Derrick carried them off to his rooms, explaining that Dean was chaperon enough and that Zilpha had planned a wonderful supper. "You know she entirely approves of you," he said, "and she's been with me for so long that she tries to control my friends as well as my diet."

Diana smiled up at him and responded with:

"I'm glad I am thought well of——"

"She was with my uncle," went on Derrick, "when I went to live with him, and after my mother died, Zilpha did—well, everything for me."

Diana's eyes expressed sympathy.

"I'm miserably travel-stained," she objected after a moment of silence.

"You can brush up there—if you will? I want you to come so much. You people don't know how lonely I've been! By jings, I'm going to kidnap you! I can, can't I, Dean?" His voice

was too tender for the words it carried, his eyes constantly seeking Diana's.

"Go to it!" answered Dean.

For a short second Derrick looked away from Diana to flash Dean a grateful smile. Then again he looked down at her, his face softening dangerously. All the way uptown he was very bold, the elation of again having her near giving him courage. He moved until his shoulder touched hers, once dared to lay a hand on her arm as the taxi jolted. He couldn't take it away immediately, couldn't answer Dean's railery about a tie which Dean felt sure to be the Christmas presentation of some adoring female.

"I think it's very pretty," said Diana.

Derrick drew a deep breath.

"It's so good to have you back," he managed to say. "So mighty good!" She lifted her face, smiled up at him. He fumbled for her hand. "Keeping warm?" he asked, his voice uneven, husky.

The supper was spread on a small table before the fire; a huge bunch of the sort of roses Diana liked, pinkish orange in tone, stood on the piano; candles and the flames from the fire-place lit the room.

Her softly breathed "*Oh!*" made Derrick's tenderness a menace. "I'll have to sit tight," he reflected, "hold off——" Deliberately he became very gay, very flippant. It almost hid what he was feeling.

"Everything here that you want?" he asked after he had taken her to his room. "Afraid I haven't any powder——"

She opened a tiny case that she had taken from her hand bag.

"I carry it," she answered.

"How do you put it on?" he asked with absurdly feigned interest. He wanted to linger there alone with her a moment; to see her standing before his bureau; the reflection of her in his big round mirror.

In response to his questions, she dabbed a chamois cloth in her box, then absolutely whitened the tip of her saucily tilted nose.

"That way," she explained. "*Beautiful*, isn't it?"

She looked up at him and laughed. He joined her, and very bravely repaired the damage. "Better," he announced, then playing vanished and with it his serious inspection and correction of her powdering. He dropped the square of chamois, closed his hands around her arms.

"I love you," he whispered. "Love you! Love you! Love you!"

"Dean," she reminded as her color receded, "will wonder. Go now—please."

"I haven't frightened you?" he asked, his words coming unevenly and in jerks.

She shook her head. At the door he turned. She was leaning against his bureau looking after him. Her pose so indelibly impressed him that he saw its phantom hundreds, thousands, of times—saw it when the sight of her in flesh was denied.

He sat before the fire for a long time after they left. The table, with its crumpled napkins, soiled silver and dishes, small coffee cups with ashes in the saucers, was left untouched.

"To-morrow," he had said as Zilpha came paddling in. "Want to be quiet now——"

She nodded and slipped away. Alone, the evening came back upon him. Its composition had been strange. The mixture of confidence and rebuff that Diana gave him had been most apparent, as had been her blithe, almost daringly gay moods which were followed by her cold repressions.

He knew that he was a stupid fool, who unwittingly often said the wrongly pitched thing, but he could not see why she had stiffened over his pleasure in her last sale. This had been made to

a tire company, and Dean's delight in it had frankly displayed the entire triumph, including the price she had been paid for it, which was twelve hundred.

"It's a bird," Dean said. "Picture of the back of a car on a wet, gray sort of night, isn't it, Diana? The lights reflect in the pavement just the way they do, you know. The red ones sort of wiggling off in the wet mirror the rain makes."

"Ah, poesy!" murmured Diana, adopting lightness because Dean's pleasure gave so much to her that she dared not show it.

"Go to the dickens!" ordered Dean without a change in tone. "The tires stick out just enough, and not too much, but you can see the marks on 'em, can't you, Di?"

"I hope so. I was ordered to insert them!"

"It's a bird," he ended, and then requested a cigarette. Derrick supplied it and solemnly shook hands with Diana.

"Congratulations," he said, because the banal seemed safest.

"Think what she pulled for it," said Dean. "Twelve hundred! Think of it!"

"And what's she going to do with all that?" asked Derrick with a sort of teasing tenderness which she provoked in him.

"Pay a debt," she answered, unsmiling, "to a man I hate, and who took from me—the dearest thing in my life." After which she got up to wander over to the piano, where she settled to play a Russian air which embraced the most depressing of minor modulations.

"She's nervous, queer at times," said Dean in an undertone. "I guess it was her father's going. It was sudden and pretty bad."

"When was it? I've wanted to ask, didn't dare."

"Last fall," Dean replied after an uneasy move.

"You—you think she suffers much?"

"I don't know," answered Dean, growing even more uneasy. "I suppose so. I think work'll fix her. Mother seems to think so, too. There were other things that upset her."

"I think I'd kill anybody who made her unhappy," said Derrick quite levelly, after which he tossed his cigarette into the fire and went over to stand by the piano, leaning over it, looking across it at Diana.

"Say, Derrick," broke in Dean, who drew near with a vellum-bound volume, "where'd you get this?"

"Forgotten," he was answered. "Like it?"

"Yes, it's a peach. Look at the illuminated letters, Di. This old guy with the gourd is a dandy, isn't he?"

"Ukulele," corrected Diana.

"Gourd," maintained Dean, "and I like it—and you——" He leaned over with his last words and kissed her. "Pretty nice, isn't she, Derrick?" he questioned.

Derrick did not reply. When he spoke all the Irish lilt that comes from the high rising of closely related love, laughter, and tears stood forth in his voice.

"That poem, now," he said, unconsciously going back to the way of his father's tongue. "The one that has to do with time, why couldn't you—I mean I—parody it? Parody it like this?"

"Hesitate, lag a bit, time in your flight, And, Diana, please be my aunt, just for to-night!"

A softer mood was on her and she laughed up at him.

"It doesn't melt her at all, Dean," said Derrick sadly. "I don't believe she'll consider it."

"My goodness," she said suddenly as a chime began to sound. "The time! We must go, Dean! It's late——"

"Oh, no!" protested their host.

"Yes, really," she answered. "I must



"Poor little things!" she said. "And when they wanted to paint, they would have to fold themselves and be still, because their owner—you would be that?—doesn't like the idea of their painting."

work to-morrow." Derrick felt the rising of the wall. "And you must, too," she added. The chill that stood out at that moment did not melt before they left. She avoided his gaze, he felt no pressure from her hand as they shook hands at the door, and he was absolutely denied the privilege of taking her home.

Now alone, he moved until he could look at the table and at the place where she had sat. His humbleness was amazing where she was concerned, and

yet he wondered why she so put him off. He was certain that no one could care more for her than he, and that he could shelter her beautifully. The strength and heat of his feeling seemed too large to live without answer. Once or twice he had been sure she felt a shade of that which leaped within him. He had been most sure of this when she had avoided meeting his gaze, been most cruel to him.

"What is it," he wondered, "what is it that makes her—afraid—turn from me?"

A shade of suspicion crept into his mind. It made him get up quickly to walk to and fro.

"It can't be that," he decided. "She is too dear to misunderstand him. It can't be that——"

He was thinking of the story of a country physician, a story that had closed with a tragedy. At length he quieted and again sank down in the big chair before the fire. Very often intensely real memories of his father came back. Sometimes the look of him in his coffin; sometimes his face alive and laughing, as it had looked when he centered a group of clamoring small persons who loved him for his talk of fairies, his jokes, and the things that came out of his shabby coat pockets. To-night Derrick slipped back into a candlelit room. He sat up in bed, confronted John McCarthy, who, after setting his candle on a marble-topped washstand, sat down on the edge of the bed.

"Now can you say you love me, because we're all alone?" he heard. And he seemed to feel the roughness of his father's cheek, the drop of moisture that tasted of salt. Diana tangled in this. He could feel the pressure of her in his arms.

"I have been hard," he acknowledged, "hard, but if she would help me——" It was love, the new love which was taking the sting from the old. Healing it, giving back to it beauty. For the first time in long years he thought of his father without hating those who had hurt his father; thought of him without despising men and turning from them.

His sharp refusal of a charity case came back. It had been weeks, months before, too.

"The man is a school-teacher, or superintendent," said some one in the office. "I thought perhaps——" The speaker faltered.

"Twelve hundred," said Derrick

Strong arrogantly. "They do not have to take my services; there are other men——"

He had swung out, knowing what would be said of him after he left; in a queer way he was glad of it. Hardness had come to be a payment, a payment he exacted from himself first, so to gather it from men. Now he grew ashamed over the recollection. He wondered what his father would think. It seemed strange that he had never thought of that before—more than strange, fanatic.

"Every one has his brain twist," he decided. "That was mine——"

The figures brought back Diana's debt. He wondered about it, dismissed it. Perhaps it was a part of her nerve disturbance. His reflections followed her. He hoped she was sleeping, sleeping dreamlessly.

After he went to bed and to sleep, he dreamed of his father who was driving old Molly down a yellow, dusty country road. A little boy whose name was Derrick sat by him and they sang of sailors, the roaring deep, and of rum on dead men's chests. And they drank pop, and the little boy pretended it was beer, and it was all very grown-up and splendid. And then the man said: "And you'll be famous and you'll cure folks that need the curin' and won't that be fine?"

The little boy said: "You bet!"

And the man said: "But nothin', nothin' could be near so fine to me as a day like this with you, son!" And then the man faded and a girl of golden hair took his place. Her arms closed around the boy's neck and suddenly he was a man. He felt the touch of her hair against his cheek, her lips. He woke to see her phantom leaning against his bureau, looking at him.

"Now, now!" admonished Wilson as he studied a little pink-and-gold card. "We mustn't quarrel! Scones?"

"I don't care. I'm not hungry. I think I only want tea."

"Very well," Wilson replied coldly. Her cavalier acceptance of his invitation, what he considered an applied boredom, annoyed him. He felt entirely sure that having tea with him and the festivity of the place must excite and please her. However, if she cared to pretend an aloofness, he could, too.

He singled out a girl with a carelessly slapped-on complexion, smoothed his hair—it was apt to be disturbed by his hat and so to reveal a slight thinning which he covered by brushing the long ones across—and began to give her his undivided attention.

"No doubt she's very much flattered," Diana commented.

"I beg pardon?"

"No doubt that girl at whom you are ogling is deeply flattered." Diana smiled after her words, and Wilson's worst frown came to the front. It no longer intimidated her.

"Once," she said dreamily, "I was afraid of you. I suppose habit made me. You systematically bullied me—began, you know, almost before I was out of short skirts, and into shorter ones. I ordered oolong and formosa. It is? The color doesn't look right."

The waitress who had set the tea things on the table disappeared, after asserting that the color was right, and Diana began to pour.

"Come to tell me that you've given Miss Hetty her house?" she asked, after the lemon or cream question had been disposed of.

"I have come to talk to you of it."

"I see."

CHAPTER XV.

Looking back, Diana never knew quite how it happened, and she did little save look back and wonder. The opportunity had given her sudden cour-

age, rather, impulse, because the emotion which rose could not have stood the test of time or reason.

She had found herself with Wilson and Derrick, and she said to Derrick: "This is my fiancé." Then the world began to swirl around her in hideous waves of leaden pain, but through it—her sudden dizziness—she saw the change in Derrick; the graying of his skin, the way his mouth settled into a hard, straight line. She tried to be glad; to remember how her father had wanted her, called for her, been kept from her by Derrick Strong; but she failed miserably. Every instinct pushed her toward him, had her say: "My dear, my dear! It isn't true!" But her hard will kept instincts chained.

After Derrick left them, Wilson preened. He had felt certain right along that she would come around. "Let's stop here," he invited, "and have tea." She nodded, and they turned in the doorway of a room which smelled sickeningly of sweets and was filled with the high buzzing of women's voices.

An alcove offered shelter, and to this Wilson directed her.

"Cozy," he said, "and so arranged that we can say what we please. Rather tastefully done, don't you think?"

She surveyed the artificial cherry blossoms, the pink draperies, and shook her head.

"Hate it," she answered, "but what's the difference how I feel? Since when have you come to care about my viewpoint?"

"I knew that you were nervously upset. That knowledge has given me patience."

"You'll need - it," she answered crisply. He looked at her, tried to frown. She was lovelier than ever, although she did not look well. There were circles under her eyes, and she was thinner than was right for her to be.

"You've been working too hard," he announced.

"Probably. Takes a lot of work to make enough to live to-day."

"Herbert told me that you were having commercial success."

"Sounds like Herbert. I suppose I am. I have been fortunate enough to sell a few of my things. I have a teacher who helped me do that—showed me how."

"To my thinking, a woman who does business loses something of her charm, her bloom, her sheltered, appealing half."

"You don't think I'm as attractive as I was?"

"I am afraid that I must say I do not."

"Well, don't worry about it," she replied cruelly. "I think you're less attractive, too. Your hair is so much thinner, and the wind's done something to it, Wilson."

He smoothed it hectically as he glared upon her. The combination was interesting and inclined the corners of Diana's lips upward. For a moment his vanity, his great caring for so little a part of him, amused. Then amusement faded and the horrible oppression which she had fixed upon herself gripped and held her.

A group of women came in and Wilson's immediately following remarks were influenced by their passing.

"This Strong," he said as they made their laughing, chatting way by the alcove, "who is he?"

She told him, wondering as she did at her control.

"Made me think of Doctor McCarthy," he commented; "if, my dear, you will pardon my mentioning such a reprobate."

"I always believed he didn't mean to do it."

"Oh, nonsense! You don't know what you are talking about. You were too young to remember it. I do——"

"I heard of it, and we knew his wife. She was a neurotic shrew. We couldn't help hearing things; she used to scream at her husband and son, and Julia says she beat the boy cruelly. He was a dear boy, too."

Wilson, who had, years before, heard of the adoption of Derrick McCarthy by his uncle Lucian Strong, and later, of Derrick Strong's squaring John McCarthy's debts, maintained silence. He preferred to think that he was respecting a man's reticence, but in reality he feared Diana's pity and its influence. He thought that Derrick Strong had looked at her with considerable interest, very considerable interest. He couldn't blame him; she was a beautiful thing.

Abruptly he set down his teacup, pushed it aside.

"Months," he said, "since I've touched your lips——"

"Please——"

"I have told people that you were coming back, and that we were only postponing our affair. It's got to be."

"I don't know——"

"It has. You'll give up this painting and come back—to live for me!"

"I told you that I couldn't tell. That I wished you'd release me."

"Release you?" He laughed suddenly, closed his hand around hers. When he looked down at it he shook his head. "Ultramarine?" he inquired.

"Perhaps. I was painting water this morning."

"Your nails are rather blunt."

"Terrible, isn't it?"

He didn't know whether she was poking fun at him, or felt the rebuff that his disapproval gave. He decided to be large.

"Those little hands shouldn't be soiled with work," he stated. "They are made to answer my will and my wants."

"Poor little things!" she said, and she turned them over to look at them

as if they were not a part of her. "Because you love them," she went on—"I suppose that's what you call it, isn't it?—they must give up everything they love. They would be required to play your accompaniments, lay out your studs, pick up your discarded collars, straighten your bureau. And when they wanted to paint they would have to fold themselves and be still, because their owner—you would be that——"

"Of course."

"Doesn't like the idea of your painting," she continued, addressing the hands directly. "It doesn't really hurt you, but it hurts his importance, your doing anything that is so apart from him. Makes his jealousy arise, isn't that it?"

"I think I do not follow."

"No matter!" she answered after a movement of her shoulders that was dangerously close to a shrug. "What have you come to tell me?" she asked.

"You promised——" he began.

The rest of that day sped swiftly and dully, although much had happened to change Diana's life and attitude. At four o'clock Wilson left her and at five she confronted her angry nephew.

"Met Derrick," he said, between quick gasps. "Met him going home. Said he'd seen you—he—my God, Di! What made you?"

She didn't answer.

"You're crazy," went on Dean; "raving crazy! He's the finest man. And he cared, he did! My gosh, how he did! Went in there one afternoon—you know how I paw around, he told me to early in the game—and I found house plans, with a two-story studio; house something like the Chambers'—Derrick knew you liked it. He'd forgotten he'd left 'em out. Got fussed, said he 'sort of hoped,' then stopped. Y—you're not good enough for a man like that. But, I—I hoped—I hoped you'd have sense to realize what was offered you."

"He never asked me."

"Hell!" He sneered at her after his words; then, laughing silently, went on with: "Suppose you didn't know he cared? Suppose you couldn't see it? I tell you—what I think of a girl who does a thing like that doesn't go in decent words. The women who are straight out bad are better than your sort."

"I think you'd better go."

"I'll go quick enough; I just want to know why you did it. What was your game?"

She sat down on the edge of her trunk, traced the outline of a hasp with her finger.

"I came here with father," she said slowly, and as would a child who has learned to recite something that he does not entirely comprehend. "They—they said that there was one chance for father, and that lay—in Derrick Strong's fingers. First he said he wouldn't touch it, said he wanted to go to the woods. 'Damn it! I wanted to go to the woods,' he said. It was that Sunday he was to meet you. Then a doctor named Anshuntz persuaded him, how I don't know, but he consented unwillingly. After his agreement, which was sullen and cruel—I heard it—he became gay; a reaction, I suppose. The next afternoon, when the time came, I went upstairs near the operating room, stayed there. I heard him joke quite a lot about Doctor Anshuntz being appealed to by my prettiness. It was heavy, cruel. He described my tears and Doctor Anshuntz's story of my appeal. But that I could have forgiven if—if he had cared."

"Before the operation he talked and laughed loudly with all the nurses. Then when father came back for a second and wanted me, and I wanted him—I had been so cross and afraid to show him how I loved him, for I was afraid I'd cry because I hated Wilson,

hated him so—then Derrick Strong kept me out. Father called me twice. I hurried to the door, and Derrick said, 'Keep the fool out!' Then father died. I heard Derrick Strong again in the hall. He said, 'Wish I'd gone to the country; the case didn't interest me. Had dozens this week, and it wasn't worth bothering with.' He didn't know I was there. And I said, 'I would hurt him, if I could, I would keep from him the dearest thing in his life!' And that was why I got you to introduce us, and when he began to care—when he began—to care——" Her voice dropped, but her finger kept tracing the outline of a trunk hasp.

Dean dropped to his knees by her, captured her hands in his. Her frightful rigidity bothered him more than had her long recital. She looked at him wonderingly.

"Dear," he said tenderly, "it would kill Derrick to hurt you."

"Father wanted me."

"I know. I know. But, Di, Derrick didn't know you were there. I say it would kill him to hurt you. Something had made him hard and flippant. He says so, and that you have made a difference." He felt her shake, dropped her hands, drew her close. Stiffly she submitted to his embrace. "You care, too," he said. "Don't hurt yourself, don't hurt yourself, with him, dear."

She pushed him aside. "If you go, I'll go to bed," she said. "My head aches—my head aches so."

CHAPTER XVI.

Mercifully the curtain of dullness which had settled over Diana lasted through the next few weeks. She worked almost unceasingly, stupidly accepted praise or correction, felt no pleasure in an order which would give her work publicity and allow her a few months' financial ease. Dean tried to

jog her from her abstraction, but gave it up, and their walks became silent affairs. Without consultation they avoided the directions which Derrick had taken with them, and after Dean had done what he could to bring her into his way of thinking, Derrick's name ceased to be mentioned.

Dean began to wonder whether she had ever cared, whether Derrick had been right in saying:

"Did that to settle her score! God, Dean, how I must have hurt her!"

"She's crazy," Dean offered on that occasion, "crazy!"

Derrick disagreed. Through very stiff lips he explained why.

"When people condemn my father," he said, after he had told his story, "I can't forgive them. It was that way with her, I suppose. That way with her. Some day—when she can talk of it more easily—tell her my story—who I am—will you? I—meant to. Perhaps she'll understand a little more, won't hate me quite so deeply."

Then Derrick lit a cigarette, and sat down in a big chair. For a few moments he smoked without speaking. When he spoke, it was to say:

"Dean, you will take awfully good care of her, won't you?"

"I will, Derrick."

"See that you do. She looked badly the last time I saw her. She's—she's not going to marry that Lane fellow?"

"No, she sent him off."

"Glad. He was a mean kid. Sometimes they change, but—I didn't like his looks. If he had been different——" Derrick stopped. He was unable to go on, truth making him fail to say, "I would have felt differently."

"I'll go now," said Dean.

"Drop in when you can——"

"Oh, no. You don't want me. Not now, I mean. I understand. I guess I sort of remind you of—of—every-

thing. When you feel differently, in a few months, I'll come."

"Do that. You know I like you, Dean."

"Sure I do, but I know how you feel. Damn this whole thing! Like you and Di better'n any one else, and I kept thinking—" A look at Derrick's face silenced him. "So long," he ended gruffly, and made his departure.

Alone Derrick wandered to and fro. He recalled his hate for a sentimental young woman, who, knowing of his connection, had dared to say:

"When I think of your start, your handicap, I could kneel before your feet!"

"What do you mean?" he asked bluntly. She explained, and he hated her. He could not forgive any misunderstanding or doubt of John McCarthy. He realized that Diana could not forgive his flippancy and unwillingness to help, his keeping her from her father and perhaps her feeling that he had not been deeply interested in the case. He tried to recall the things he had said that day; the things that she might have overheard. Bits of his imitation of old Doctor Anshuntz had seeped in upon him the night before.



Suddenly he picked her up, sat down with her in the big chair in which he'd dreamed; and his dreams grew faint before realities.

He flung his arms wide, groaned, the thought of her hurt making that.

He smiled bitterly as he remembered Dean's "In a few months, when you feel differently," for he knew very truly that he would never change. Diana was the first woman who had stirred him, who had called from him his deeper self. That many had tried to do this, even he could not deny. He was by way of being a lion, had money,

and was enough indifferent to command interest. Notes, flowers, and cigarettes came from the sentimental doctor-chasing kind. Such attentions, changed expressions, flattering appeals for his opinions, could not fail to register, and they had given him amusement, rarely anything else. But now—now he knew that all his boasts—which were confined to an audience of one and made in silence—were false. He knew that he was capable of caring and caring deeply, knew that he did. And knowing that she did not care brought at first numbness and then a feeling that made him wonder whether he had ever known pain before.

The tranquillity of his fooms maddened him, the space and peace of them. Fancies made him see a work bag on an Italian chest, some one's small, crumpled handkerchief in a chair. With his endless, morbid introspection, and the phantom of Diana before his bureau, his nights became hells.

"I'll have to get away," he decided after Dean left; "get away——" He drew a deep, unsteady breath, looked down at his miserably, nervous, twisting hands. Those were left him, and he had learned his lesson about how skill alone could fail. He could help, help generously, where he was needed. Perhaps, on the boomerang principle, he would some day feel a sort of quiet.

He thought of a hospital in France where he had worked during the war. There was work left to do, and there was little money to accomplish it. He would go back and see what could be done. Perhaps long hours and hard cases would bring interest and semi-forgetfulness. Perhaps some day he would be able to think of her quietly, without quickened breath, without moving hands, and the hot sense of an unjust God.

But to think that it was over crippled him, left him weak. He could not quite believe it.

Again and again he found himself turning toward the places where they had met, after a few steps realizing with a shock that his direction was meaningless. On those days when he left the hospital at four or five, he felt most acutely his loneliness. For he had almost always been able to find them; a tacit understanding of walking aims having sprung up. He had picked them up in his motor or walked with them. He had never cared what they did, where they were. Being with her had entirely filled his heart with happiness—more, left him at moments half blinded, groping.

His first sight of her had always held the same sudden quickening of his pulses and the wonder that any one, anything could matter so much. Now that was over, done.

No more his, "Am I late?" as his hand closed around hers. No more his somewhat breathless, "Simply great, seeing you. I've been thinking of it all day!" That part of his life, of him, so recent of birth, but so deeply grown, was over—over, done.

"Have to get away," he muttered, "away from—this——"

He got up, hunted in a drawer for the card of a Paris physician whom he knew well, sat down to write him. Halfway down the page he wrote:

I could start some time in April, if you think well of this. I am determined to make a change, and, if you want me and need me, I'll come.

For a moment he paused, pushed away the page, spoke aloud without knowing that he spoke or what he said, saying simply, "Diana?" and then he began to write again, finished his letter.

At that same moment Diana was writing one, and this to the friend of her girlhood, Isabel. She was telling her that she was happy to hear of her engagement to Wilson and that she wished them happiness. Her own mis-

erable experience with Wilson made her doubt the possibility, and yet Isabel would see him as Isabel would, not as he was, which is a merciful dispensation allowed by the little god with wings.

Wilson's failure to do as she had wanted ended her connection with him. And the fact that Miss Hetty was dead did not, greatly to his bafflement, change her.

"She's gone now," he had said. "What's the use of fussing? Died two or three days after she moved. So you see all your objection was rather unnecessary."

"That doesn't change what you did," she answered.

"No," he in turn replied, "but some one will live there. Why shouldn't we?" His moral vision was opaqued, would ever be so. He could not see the delicate shades of right and wrong, and would trust no one's eyes but his own.

"If you insist," he continued stiffly, "I will sell the property."

"It's too late," she answered; "everything's too late. I will not marry you. If Miss Hetty were alive and you did as I wanted, probably I should not. I have—I've learned."

He grew bitter and more, he railed at her. She was quiet beneath his tirade, accepting it meekly.

"After all," she said when he finished, "you failed to do as I asked, so a little of the fault lies with you. And some day you'll be grateful to me. We would have been unhappy."

"Grateful!" he said sneeringly. "When every one will say you've jilted me? Why, if it hadn't been for that, I wouldn't have come near you, for I'm through—sick—tired of you! But—when every one knows we were engaged, when every one will say——"

"Let them think you turned me down," she suggested. "I won't care."

He looked at her scornfully; but she

heard, only three days after his return, that he was paying violent attention to Isabel and that he had loudly asserted that she, Diana, was looking badly and had lost her charm. She didn't smile over it, nor the pitying vein in Isabel's note, which, although kind, could not subdue triumph. She had written:

Wilson says that he didn't dream any one could be so happy. We are to be married in May and the cellar for our house is being dug. It is to be on Miss Hetty West's lot. Perhaps you heard that she died, which was just as well, since the poor old thing had a queer, sort of crazy attachment to the place. She used to walk by just to touch the tree trunks before she died, and you know that would make you nervous. How are you getting on? Wilson says you look much older, which is what work does to you, I suppose. Do write, dear. I would ask you to be my bridesmaid if people didn't think what they have, and it would embarrass us all and make talk, but you understand. So busy I can hardly see. Worlds of love!
ISABEL.

P. S.—Do write!

So that was finished. Of the other thing that was done with, she tried not to think, but trying and doing are two things, and she found herself an amateur. Nights were the worst.

"If," she reflected, "you could work all day and all night it would be better, but when you have to *try* to sleep——"

"You're looking groggy," said Dean one afternoon in early April. "Feel all right?"

"I suppose so," she answered listlessly.

"Won't acknowledge that you care for Derrick?" he asked bluntly. She turned appealing eyes in his direction.

"How can I?" she asked.

He shook his head. "I give up," he admitted. "Give up."

"I know you don't understand," she said. "And it makes me appreciate your patience. It seems very real to me, but I suppose no one could understand."

"He did."

She turned from the window where she had been standing, turned quickly.

"What do you mean?" she asked. "You told him of my—my feeling?"

"I did."

She drew close to her nephew, put a hand on his arm.

"Did it hurt him," she asked; "hurt him badly?" There was anything but triumph in her tone.

"Yes, badly!"

She sat down on a trunk, and, as she had months before, outlined a hasp with her finger, absorbed in it.

"What did he say?" she asked below her breath.

"He told me what made him understand, and he told me to explain it to you when I thought you wanted to talk of it."

"His story?"

"He's John McCarthy's son. He wanted me to assure you that he is not ashamed of it, but proud, truly proud! He wanted to tell you, but you mattered so much, and the idea of your misunderstanding loomed such a horrible thing that he put it off. And he wanted to do that at the same time that he asked something else and I was always around. You kept me near, you know. That tragedy, the way people turned against his father, made him hard. He told me to tell you so, to ask you to make that much allowance for him."

"His name?" she asked.

"It was an uncle's, the uncle with whom Derrick and his mother went to live after the tragedy. He had no children and wanted his name carried on. He promised Derrick financial backing if he consented to the adoption, and it was Derrick's only chance. His sort of education costs a mint, you know."

"I suppose so."

"And he's done a world of good, in spite of what you think. And he's going to do more. He's going to France next week."

"France?"

"Yes, to work there, and stay there for goodness knows how long. We'll probably never see him again!"

He watched her narrowly, saw her push her hair away from her forehead with a fumbling, sick sort of gesture.

"I would like," she said, "to say I am sorry before he goes. Do you think he would let me do that, Dean? He must hate me; I don't know how he could help it. I have been thinking of it for months, knowing he must. How could he help it? But if I could, say I was sorry——"

CHAPTER XVII.

As Diana put on her hat she realized that all the heat had gone from her feeling.

"Impulse," she said, turning away from the mirror and toward Dean, "made me do that. I couldn't have done it unless I'd done it in a hurry, although I thought I should, that it was right. I can't explain. I have thought of telling him I was sorry a great deal, especially at night when I couldn't sleep, I thought of that, and then I'd strengthen and harden myself with remembering. Now, I see it so differently that I can't understand how I have stood out so long. I suppose he would let me say I was sorry?"

"Probably," answered Dean. He smiled down at her whimsically, but met no response. Diana's every emotion being subdued by, covered with one.

"Get your hanky?" asked Dean as they reached the door.

She fumbled in a pocket, nodded.

"And money? You may have to bus yourself home." His eyes twinkled, but she didn't see them, and again she nodded.

"Well, then, come on!" he ordered. He slipped an arm through hers, pressed it close, laughed jubilantly. Her

look of faint inquiry added to his high elation.

"What are you going to say?" he asked. "Tell him that you don't hate him?"

"If he'll let me."

"I think maybe he'll let you do that. I've met men who would, and Derrick's no exception. Might tell him you like his tie, too, mention the set of his clothes with that age-worn but ever fresh, 'Do you *mind* telling me who your tailor is?' And then, if there's any time left and you don't know what to do with it, you might speak of the weather."

She looked up at him inquiringly.

He answered the question in her expression:

"Oh, I'm just a little crazy! Don't mind me!" Again he pressed her arm close.

"My gosh, I'm happy! I care more for you and Derrick than for any one, and I see a resumption of the meetings of the three D's."

"You're not coming with me?" she said, thinking that he spoke of the immediate future.

"Not coming with you?" He teased delightfully and on occasion with a great seriousness, and his mood made for doing it now. "Thought you wanted me," he explained, "thought you needed me. I could stand by and hold a glass of water for you to sip at between paragraphs. Going to make a speech, aren't you?"

"Oh, honey, *don't!*" she begged, and he grew silent, expressing himself for the rest of the way through his hand on her arm and a rather unnecessarily tender care of her.

A sky that had threatened rain since noon began to fulfill its prophecy. Large drops splattered heavily across the pavement, first far apart, then closer.

"Damn it!" came from Dean. Ahead of them loomed the Chamberlain Hos-

IO

pital, high and sprawling gray buildings within an iron-fenced park. "Run for it?" asked Dean.

"Yes."

The rain, which was coming in slanting sheets, had pretty well soaked them before they reached the rotunda. Here they stood, dripping, laughing, Diana nervously, unsteadily, as they waited for Derrick Strong.

"He wanted to come for you, but I said we'd meet him here," said Dean. "Thought it would be easier than waiting. I didn't know it was going to pour."

"It doesn't matter."

"It doesn't? Survey my duds!"

"I'll stand the pressing."

"You'd better, woman! I said, 'Doctor Strong, she wants to see you. She would like to call'—didn't tell him that your room was full of wash, paints, palettes, and unwashed dishes?—'and when, please?' after which he gulped, gave me the date, and offered to come for you. Then I said—"

"Hush, Dean," she ordered, for she saw that Derrick Strong was nearing them. He didn't offer to shake hands, and he kept his eyes fixed on Dean.

"Have I kept you waiting?" he asked.

Dean, who had begun to absorb the general tenseness, answered after an unnecessary and meaningless laugh.

"Pouring, isn't it?" asked Derrick.

"You're pretty wet."

"It's frightful," replied Diana. She wished that he would look at her, not show so plainly the aversion he felt. It made what she wanted to say exceedingly difficult to produce.

"Motor me to Sixty-seventh," said Dean. "Then I'll leave you. Have to do some work for exams."

No one answered him, and, without speaking, they started toward the side entrance, before which were parked many cars.

The ride uptown was a hazy thing;

Diana never sifted it free from blur. Dimly she remembered Dean's taking his departure, the way the brakes protested as they started on again. People with umbrellas, wet, shiny pavements, a skidding motor, all tangled with her feeling of dull hopelessness.

Once Derrick asked if she were chilled, and, after her negative response, quiet again gripped them. After they had ridden up in the elevator, had entered his rooms, and he had lighted the fire, he turned to her.

"You're so very wet," he said. "You'd better lay off your coat and your hat. We can put them here where they'll dry a little before you go."

"Yes," she answered as she felt around for hatpins and buttons. She found her hands stiff, clumsy.

"Lights?" he asked. "It's so dark to-day."

"I think the firelight's prettier," she replied, "and easier to talk in."

"I guess it is. Will you sit here? Or is it too near the heat?" She shook her head, settled, and he near her in the big chair which had so often held, with him and his dreams, a phantom of blazing, yellow hair.

"Would you mind very much if I smoked?" he asked.

"No, please do."

"Thank you." He scratched a match, lit his cigarette, spoke: "You want to talk to me of your father, don't you? Dean said you had something to ask me, and I judged it was that. I am very glad to tell you whatever I can."

"No, it isn't that."

He turned to her, half expecting an accusation. Perhaps she didn't want to talk, except to tell him what she thought. Her eyes didn't meet his.

"What"—he began, brusque because seeing her made so deep an ache that he felt he could not long sustain it—"what did you want to speak of?" He softened, forgot himself as he saw her quickly and nervously moving hands.

"I didn't mean to hurry you," he added gently.

"It's hard to say."

"It shouldn't be. I am going to understand anything you care to say to me. I think it is your father, isn't it, Diana? I was brutal because I let my own shadow shadow others. Dean told you?"

She nodded. Something in her eyes made him wonder, but the strain of the moment kept him from seeing the truth.

"I wouldn't have hurt you," he went on, his voice growing rough. "I wouldn't have hurt you—" It failed him, and for a moment he sat silent. "I did my best, although it may not have seemed so," he said at length. "You must believe that."

"I do!"

He turned to her, saw that she was crying.

"Oh, my dear!" he whispered. "My dear!"

"Dean said I'd need a handkerchief," she said, "but I—I seem to have lost it." He gave her his, watched her miserably as she wiped her eyes. A flush that had risen, her wet lashes, made her look like a child; a gorgeously beautiful child, caught and held by the lack of words. He wondered what she was trying to say, how he could help her? Getting up, he put more wood on the fire, stood back to it, looking down on her. The restlessness that she put within him made standing easier.

"Do you remember," he asked, "how my father loved you?"

"Yes."

"You helped him. You know that, don't you?"

"I hope so. I do hope so."

"You did, and he needed it. He had a hard life. But he always believed in helping people and he never let their lacks sour him. He gave when he had little to give, gave the best thing any doctor can give, and that is love. What

I am trying to say is hard to express; hard because I don't quite understand it myself. Only, I first wanted to meet you because of my father. I could see you, when you were a little bit of a thing with flying red-yellow curls, see you held tight in his arms, patting his face. It made me want to touch your hands. You see, I wanted to reach my father, but I failed because I would not respect his beliefs. I would not believe that the heart of a doctor must keep step with his hands, and I would give nothing but my skill. Then you, who loved and were loved by my father, came and taught me, made me believe his creed, and it seems as if—he sent you, and to-day—I feel him more closely than I ever have before.”

“I didn't want to hurt you,” said Diana. “Derrick, I didn't!” She stood up, gropingly reached toward him.

“You've been worried about me?” he questioned, his hands around hers, patting them as he would a child's.

“Oh, yes!”

“But you helped me, for you've made me a better instrument, and there's need for them.”

“I hurt you?”

He nodded before answering:

“There is always pain before healing.” He tried to smile down at her, managed to, but weakly. Suddenly he loosed his hands, dropped hers. “Is that all?” he asked. “All you wanted to say?”

“I wanted to ask you to forgive me.”

“There is no question of that. It—it is the other way.”

“And—and to know that you don't hate me.”

“I shall always love you,” he answered. He said it more loudly than he intended to, for the strain had weakened the way of his will, making the things he would do and say impulsive and problematic. Even in the height of the feeling that those words always set upon him, he felt that he had made

them ridiculous; but she did not. She had moved closer, and again he felt her hands. They touched his arms fleetingly, rested on his shoulders.

“Then it is all right?” she asked unsteadily.

“I would rather have loved you and suffered than to have missed you,” he answered. “But—but now, Diana—I guess—you'd better go.” She looked up into the misery that was captured in his eyes and smiled.

“You're going to France?” she asked.

“Yes, and I'm going to think of you, what my mistake led me to do to you; and I am going to do everything I haven't done so far, everything I've failed to do, should have done.”

“Such as,” she said, “buttoning my frocks that button up the back—I have two—and loving me?”

Unable to believe, he held her away for a moment, then utterly close within his arms.

“I love you,” he whispered against her hair. “*Love you! Love you!*” She tightened her arms around his neck, he felt the pressure of her lips, grew inarticulate. Suddenly he picked her up, sat down with her in the big chair in which he'd dreamed, and his dreams grew faint before realities. He learned the soft feel of her hair; the dear shelter that came when his face was pressed against her throat; the fact that love's sweetness made his eyes wet; and that she, too, had dreamed.

“I've thought,” she whispered, after some interval had passed, “of sitting here with you, I've thought of it so much, Derrick.”

He, slower to come back, could only answer: “Dear! My dear!”

For a moment she sat erect, framed his face with her hands, let him read everything that stood forth in her eyes.

“I don't know how I lived without you,” she informed him, “and I won't again, dearest. I couldn't! When will you marry me?”



WHAT THE STARS SAY

by Madame Renée Longuille

To the Heavens above us O look and behold
The Planets that love us, all harnessed in gold!
What chariots, what horses against us shall bide
While the stars in their courses do fight on our side?

RUDYARD KIPLING.

HOW TO READ YOUR OWN HOROSCOPE

LESSON XII.

SATURN, vibrating through the celestial sign Aquarius, causes the person whose map of life shows this relation of the heavenly bodies to be of a sober, thoughtful disposition. He will be the sort of person who will work quietly and persistently along the lines of any profession he may choose, gaining money and respect, rewards which seem to others a sudden benefit, because they have failed to notice the unassuming but determined efforts of the native. His love affairs will not be exciting nor of much interest to outsiders, but his love will be a faithful, enduring kind and marriage with him is generally quietly successful. The last of life finds this native very much better off than in his younger days, and enjoying a true philosophy that has been gained by the intelligent study and mental assimilation of his many experiences. This is the type of person who learns much from living and does not have to go through life's lessons repeatedly; once seems to be sufficient. His intellect gathers knowledge and judgment for use in the next plane of existence.

The great malefic planet Saturn

poised in the sign Pisces at the moment of a person's birth tends to bring him sorrows and unhappy experiences in life. If Saturn is strong or prominent on the chart, the native will probably suffer through a secret attachment which seems at its beginning to be light or of little consequence, but soon grows serious and ends in distress and misery. "Bad luck" will at times seem to pursue him, but the fault will really lie within him, for he will lack sufficient lightness of heart and courage to overcome his handicaps, thus causing him to be his own worst enemy. He seems to be unfortunate in money matters, and if he lends money he might as well call the loan a gift and say "good-by" to it, for the friend or whoever has extracted it will be unable to return it or have no inclination to do so. The native with this position of Saturn is usually unhappy, or unfortunate, in marriage. The marriage partner may have an illness of long duration. After many troubles in life and much unhappiness, the Saturn-in-Pisces native will at last turn his attention to the unseen world for hope and consolation after

all in the visible world has seemingly been against him. - His death is likely to be very sad or tragic.

The Erection of the Map

The first map for a student of astrology to study should, of course, be his own. So now if you who are ambitious to read the messages of the stars and know their guiding powers will arm yourself with pencil and paper, we shall proceed to erect a simple map of the heavens before attempting to interpret the influences and positions any further. Each nativity, or chart, will show plainly what kind of seeds and deeds have been sown in the past and what sort of harvest you must reap in the future. In astrology the future is as easily seen as are the past and present. Your character and capabilities are clearly indicated on your chart, which, if properly drawn, will serve you as a safe guide through life.

At any good bookstore you must buy an ephemeris for the year you were born. This is simply an almanac giving the positions of the planets in the heavens for that year. The only other tool you must have is a little pamphlet called "Table of Houses," which will be procurable at the same store in which you find the ephemerides. Now draw a circle three or four inches in diameter and divide it into twelve equal sections radiating from the center. We will call these sections "houses." The top of the circle is marked south, the bottom is north, the left-hand side, east, and the right-hand side, west. The line which you have drawn through your circle from east to west is called the horizon, and the division directly under this line on the left-hand side must be marked "I," indicating the first house. The next division proceeding toward the bottom of the circle which you have marked north is number "II" for the second house, and so on around the cir-

cle of twelve sections, each one of which will represent one of the twelve houses. The first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth divisions form the lower half of the circle, and the seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth, in their order, form the upper half of the circle. If the points of your circle, north, south, east, and west, seem to you to be twisted and contrary to the familiar points of the compass, do not let that worry you just now; the explanation of why this must be would only confuse you at this stage of your work.

Up to this point all our maps are exactly alike and this foundation is the same for every chart. The first house, section marked "I" on your circle, will represent your personal appearance and general type of mind. This division of the chart is referred to as the "ascendant." It rules the head and face, and if, for instance, the planet Venus happens to be located in this division at the time of the native's birth, he will have dimples in the cheeks or chin, but if Mars is found there, a scar or mole is likely to be very evident on the head or face.

The division marked "II" will tell the nature of monetary conditions in the life of the native. Good planets falling in this house will bring money, while malefic planets will give the clew to money losses. The parts of the body denoted by this house are the throat and ears.

The third house will tell of brothers and sisters, near neighbors, short journeys, writings, and study. It rules the arms, shoulders, and lungs.

The fourth house is a very important division of the chart and should be given a great deal of study and attention. It is often called "the house of the grave." Conditions at the end of life are foretold by the occupants of this house, or the planets ruling it. It also represents domestic conditions and

indicates whether home surroundings are to be happy or miserable. If maléfics are found poised in this house, do not continue to live near your place of birth if you expect good fortune, contentment, and prosperity. On the other hand, if good planets fall there, the greatest prosperity for you will be found near the place at which you were born. This house also symbolizes the father. It rules the breasts, stomach, and digestive organs.

The fifth division tells of children, pleasures, games, churches, and all amusements. This is the house to study for enlightenment as to games of chance, speculations, or invested money. The map of a "lucky" gambler will have fortunate planets falling in this house, but if Saturn happens to be poised there the native must keep away from the stock market and all hazardous games. Love affairs outside of marriage are also shown. The parts of the body denoted by the fifth house are the heart and back.

The sixth house is called "the house of sickness and service." Diseases to which the native is most liable will be indicated here. It also represents servants of the native. The bowels and the solar plexus are ruled by this division of the chart.

The house marked "VII" is the house of marriage, a most important and strong house to study. If a planet is found in this house it will describe the marriage partner and practically give a history of the union. Although this is the division of the map to study for enlightenment as to love and marriage, it is, strange to say, the house that tells of enemies and lawsuits that are public and open. If Mars afflicted is found here the native should be advised not to marry, since divorce or sudden disaster is almost sure to follow. However, if Venus or Jupiter is found in this house happily aspected, marriage will be the most fortunate step the na-

tive could take. The parts of the body denoted by this house are the veins and the kidneys.

The eighth division is "the house of death." All matters connected with death, such as legacies, wills, and life insurance, are shown here. The kind of death the native will experience is foretold by this division, which, obviously, has some connection with the fourth house. The eighth is an occult house and planets poised here will give clues to the success or failure of dealings with metaphysical subjects. It rules the generative system.

The ninth house concerns the native's long journeys, religion, and dreams. The higher mind is reflected through it. It rules the thighs and hips.

The tenth is the house of reputation, fame, and profession. Next to the first, it is the most important house in the circle to study. As the fourth denoted the native's father, this house will signify the mother. It rules the knees.

The eleventh house denotes the native's friends, hopes, and wishes. The type of friends and acquaintances he will meet is shown by the planets in this house or ruling it. It rules the legs and ankles.

The twelfth house, which completes the circle and is adjacent to the first division, will show secret enemies, as well as sorrows and occult tendencies on the part of the native. It is said to be the most critical house of the circle. The feet and toes are ruled by it.

On each of the radiating lines of your circle which separate the houses from each other will be found a sign of the zodiac. The order of the signs is constant and you will find it a convenience to commit to memory the names of the signs in their order, as follows; Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces. Wherever Aries is found on a chart it

must be touched on one side by Taurus and on the other by Pisces. Opposite Aries on the circle, you will always find Libra; opposite Taurus, Scorpio; opposite Gemini, Sagittarius, and so on. For quick reference it is well to write down the opposite sign for each of the twelve signs.

The next step in the erection of our map is to find out from the individual almanac, or ephemeris for the year of birth, and the little book called "Table of Houses" the sign of the zodiac which falls on the first house or on the horizon. Turn in the ephemeris to the month and day on which you were born and mark a straight line under it across the two pages of the almanac before you.

At the top of the first column on the left-hand page in the ephemeris you will find the letters D M, meaning days of the month. The next very narrow column is headed by the letters D W, meaning days of the week. Next comes a wider column headed by the words Sidereal Time. Follow this column down the page to your own day of birth, which you have marked with a pencil line across the page. Here you will find your own sidereal time which you must write at the top of your sheet of paper on which you have drawn your circle of houses. If you are fortunate enough to know the exact hour of your birth, this is where you must make first use of it. If it was in the morning, say, for instance, ten o'clock, or two hours before noon, subtract two hours from the sidereal time you have written down at the top of the page. If you were born at eight o'clock, subtract four from your sidereal time, since eight o'clock is four hours less than noon. Three o'clock in the morning would mean that you would have to subtract nine hours, no minutes, no seconds, from the sidereal time, which in the ephemeris is calculated and set down in hours, minutes,

and seconds, marked, as you will see, at the top of the column by the small letters H. M. S. If you were born in the afternoon simply add the number of hours after the noon hour to your sidereal time. If you were born at half past two in the afternoon, for instance, you would add two hours and thirty minutes and so on, always remembering to subtract if you were born before noon, and to add if the event occurred in the afternoon. The resulting sidereal time, or the nearest to it, must be found in the Table of Houses referred to above.

Raphael's ephemeris is extremely simple and well known. It contains the Table of Houses for Liverpool, and sometimes for London and New York. Should you find, after adding your particular birth hour to the sidereal time, that the total exceeds twenty-four, simply subtract twenty-four hours and proceed with the remainder. Again, if you find that sidereal time is not large enough to subtract your birth hour, add twenty-four to the sidereal time given and then deduct the number of hours and minutes you were born before noon. Every one will not have to resort to this last rule, but a few may meet with this seeming complication in drawing the chart.

With the corrected sidereal time, turn next to the table of houses, hunting down the column marked sidereal time for the number nearest to your own corrected time. Make a pencil mark under the number you have chosen and then straight across the block of numbers. Notice that the next column is narrow and at the top there is the number 10 and immediately under it the symbol of a zodiacal sign. Now you have the first thing to mark on your circle, for this number ten, with the sign below it, means that you may place this sign on the cusp of your tenth house, which is the line at the very top of the circle which you have marked south,

the real degree of that sign being signified by the number parallel to the sidereal time number you have already marked with your pencil.

Again, the next small column is headed by the number 11, with a sign of the zodiac indicated directly under it. This denotes the sign to be placed on the cusp of your eleventh house, which is the line dividing the tenth house from the eleventh. The degree for your special map will be found just above the pencil mark you have made. The number 12 heads the third narrow column with the symbol for the sign under it. Place this sign on the line dividing your eleventh house from the twelfth. For the special degree of this sign, look to the pencil line in the same column.

You will next notice a doubly wide column at the top of which, instead of a number, you will see the abbreviation Ascen, or Asc, meaning ascendant, with the symbol of the sign as usual underneath. The correct degrees have already been marked with your pencil. This sign, with the number of degrees,

goes on the horizon or line of your circle which you have marked East. This line is the cusp of your first house, a very important point in your horoscope.

There remain only two more small columns headed "2" and "3" respectively, with their signs as before underneath. Now, with the second and third cusps of the houses do as you have done with the others. This is as far as the table of houses will take you and, probably to your surprise, only half of your circle is supplied with signs and degrees. The rest is very simple because your table of opposite signs which you would have done well to note down, as suggested above, comes into play. Thus, if you find the sign Aries on one of your cusps, the same number of degrees of Libra must be placed on the exact opposite cusp and vice versa. So it is only necessary for the book to give you half of your circle, since you can fill in the other half yourself when you know the opposite signs, remembering that the same degree of the sign you are given goes on the sign you supply.



THE PERFECT MARRIAGE

YES, said the man who was seldom seen at his club, "my marriage is a success.

I live in a thoroughly comfortable, homelike atmosphere; everything goes like clockwork—perfectly businesslike, and yet all sweet and feminine. Evelyn manages things in such a competent way that I don't object if she is a bit domineering at times. We all have to overlook something in those we care for. Of course, she provokes me at times, as when she refuses to let the groceries be delivered if meals do not go off on schedule, and when she keeps the boy from school against my wishes because she thinks some child there has a cold, and——"

"But I didn't know your wife's name was Evelyn!" interrupted an old friend.

"It isn't. I'm not talking about my wife. I am telling you about Evelyn, our cook."

IRENE VAN VALKENBURG.



Stories *and* Things in General

THE other day we picked up a book entitled "Famous Reviews," or something of the sort. It was a collection of critical articles written on the original publication of books which have since been hailed as masterpieces. It was interesting. The critics took their work seriously in those days. Nowadays, the men who write criticisms for papers and magazines are likely to take their work in a light and holiday spirit. A long novel will be reviewed in a few hundred words, and there may be a bit of humor in the performance.

THE old-time reviewers took their work a great deal more seriously. Sometimes it seems as if the reviews must have been nearly as long as the things they reviewed. There was very little humor in the work, and what there was was generally sarcastic, not to say savage, in its tone. There was a great deal of painstaking analysis and labored exposition. Generally speaking, the attitude of the book reviewer was that the world was practically finished. There was to be nothing new under the sun, and any one attempting to introduce anything new under the sun was guilty of a high crime and several misdemeanors. If a man were born poor, he was expected to remain poor, and to be contented in the position "in which God had placed him." Books were for the wealthy and fashionable world and

should be written for gentlemen by gentlemen. Poor John Keats, the presumptive apothecary who was later to be hailed as one of the great lyric poets of all time, was handled in such a way as might have broken the heart of a less sensitive man. His poetry was nonsense and his proper place was behind the counter. Sometimes we feel a little discouraged, and then something like this turns up to make us think that the world is, after all—and outside of the institution of warfare—a kinder place than it used to be.

MANY of the book reviews are anonymous, but now and then we run across one signed by an eminent name such as Lord Macaulay or Sir Walter Scott. And it is refreshing to find that such reviews are generally kinder in tone as well as more interesting than the others. One especially interesting was contributed by Sir Walter on the work of Frances Burney. Frances Burney was the original feminist. She lived in an age when it was fashionable for young ladies to faint, when their place was the home, and when shyness and ignorance of most of the things of life were rated among the feminine virtues. Frances never dreamed of getting the right to vote. Only selected males had that privilege then. She did not say that women had a right to go into business. She would have been shocked at that herself. She

did claim, however, the right to write a book—and she wrote several. She wrote "Evelina; or, a Young Lady's Entrance Into the World," and followed this with "The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties." There was a general howl at the idea of a woman's writing a book, and a novel at that. Old Sir Walter is plainly interested at the thought of a woman's writing about the secrets of a woman's heart. Such intimacies! He is almost shocked—not quite. He is plainly surprised at Miss Burney's suggestion that sometimes a woman takes a fancy to a man and falls in love with him without being desperately pursued by the man in the first place. He had never thought of such a thing before. He refers to the "secret rites" of womanhood, but on the whole he rather likes it. His own novels reveal the fact that he had never known any young woman, at least, particularly well, but the old boy had something in him that would have made him not altogether intolerant of the modern flapper if he had known her.

SOMEWHERE about the same time, or a little later, the Brontë sisters cut loose with several novels which sold well but which provoked rather horrified, if appreciative, criticism. They signed them with pen names. One book reviewer says that he has heard a rumor that these books were written by women, but he is too horrified with the thought to believe it for an instant. He says that no woman could have known the things in these books, and therewith proceeds to prove it. In conclusion he says that if any woman has been mad enough to read these novels, which he plainly enjoyed reading, she must be one "who has forfeited forever the society of her own sex!" Poor Miss Brontë! Severe criticism may be all right, but isn't this getting a little rough?

AND now, three generations later, practically within the lifetime of an old man, we have magazines written almost entirely by women, who seem to know all phases of life, and who, instead of harming themselves with the dangerous fruit of the tree of knowledge, have brought into our fiction a wholesome and breezy sanity, a natural and gentler philosophy of life which seems to help men and women alike. We wish Sir Walter might have read the serial by Beatrice Grimshaw, which starts in the next issue of this magazine. Miss Grimshaw is the author of "Vaiti of the Islands" and a number of other stirring and colorful books of South Sea life. She has lived among the savages of the islands and civilized races who have drifted there, the jetsam and flotsam from the Western World. "Conn of the Coral Seas" is a novel Scott would have enjoyed. He would have been surprised that a woman should have command of that narrative of romance and masculine adventure of which he was the supreme master in his day. He would have found, too, a breath of passion, of womanly emotion, of tense drama, a thrilling something that in many cases it is given better to a woman writer to convey than to a man.

YOU will have in the June issue of **SMITH'S** a magazine almost entirely written by women. Margaret Pedler, Izöla Forrester, Inez Klumph, Katharine Haviland Taylor, Kay Cleaver Strahan—all have contributed short stories. There is the second installment of the serial, "Mr. Essington at Large," by J. Storer Clouston, a tabloid, illustrated version of William Archer's striking new play, "The Green Goddess," and Doctor Whitney's article on health and beauty. Altogether, it is a splendid number—and a far cry from the day when it was thought unladylike for a girl to write a novel!



Old Age Deferred

By Doctor Lillian Whitney

Dr. Whitney is always glad to answer all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health, but she cannot undertake to answer letters which fail to inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply, or to letters inclosing Canadian stamps. Every week she receives many letters of this sort, in spite of the notice always printed at the end of this department. Sometimes, even, the post office sends notification that letters are being held for her, which careless writers have posted with no stamp. If you have failed to receive a reply to your letter, you may know that it is for one of these three reasons.—EDITORS.

EVER since a famous Austrian physician used this title to discuss the ravages of time, it has been employed and quoted the world over. Within the last year a new impetus has been given to the fascinating subject by a number of scientists who are attacking the problem of old age from various angles.

"Old age!" Horrible term! Who does not long to stay the onslaught of time? Who does not shudder at the prospect of senility, of a pitiful decrepit, ugly, doddering old age? Who, pray, would not grasp any means of preserving youthful faculties plus youthful looks?

The fact that in almost every period in man's history, so far as our actual knowledge goes, there have been searchers after an "elixir of life," each with endless credulous followers, proves that no matter how world-weary some persons may be with the gift of life, there are as well millions of persons who want it prolonged, but—in the fulsome-ness of youth. This again proves that love of life with beauty is deeply in-

grained in the human heart, and that it is one of the fundamental elements which lifts human beings above mere animals.

There can be no doubt from biblical records and other ancient sources that the span of life in former eras was considerably longer than that enjoyed to-day. "Full threescore years and ten" was the rule. While these people lived to a ripe old age, they did not carry their youth with them; it faded, but vitality remained.

What are our *vital forces* and how can they be sustained? As many of our readers may recall, Metchnikoff, the famous Russian bacteriologist, thought he had found the antidote to old age in the Bulgarian lactic-acid bacillus. What was his idea based upon? It was based upon the fact that the Bulgarian peasantry live to a ripe old age on a diet of black bread and sour milk; that sour milk contains acetic-acid bacilli; that these bacilli are unusually vigorous in the milk of cattle reared in Bulgaria; that—here is the point—these bacilli destroy the colon

bacilli in the large intestine of human beings. Colon bacilli in untoward numbers cause a breaking down of bodily vigor owing to the vast putrefactive changes they set up in the colon.

This was Metchnikoff's theory in which there lies a great truth. Unfortunately it is too easy, too simple, for us to carry out. We want something more mysterious and savoring of the unknown and the occult.

Now our vital forces are directly sustained through the integrity of the ductless glands. A fuller knowledge of these remarkable little organs has only come to us in recent years. Many present-day investigators in the field of rejuvenation pin their faith on these glands. One investigator claims marvelous results from implanting the interstitial glands of monkeys in human beings. Other investigators use thyroid-gland secretions. A miraculous change was affected by this means in Connie Ediss, the English comédienne, who at fifty found herself old, ill, and gray, a despairing figure facing oblivion in her profession. Almost overnight the miracle was wrought, and Connie Ediss again is able to delight audiences with all her youthful sparkle and vivacious charm!

It is a well-established scientific fact that thyroid glandular secretions give to the body its force and energy; when this development is exaggerated, it expresses itself in an overwhelming ambition such as that of Napoleon Bonaparte. Medical historians are now convinced that he was a victim of excessive thyroidism. On the other hand, deficient thyroidism is responsible for premature senility and all those unfortunate evidences of old age which accompany this state: wrinkles, graying hair, dull eyes, sagging tissues, dragging steps, flagging spirits, and so on, and so on.

In the case of Connie Ediss, the living secretions from animal glands were

employed, but every one cannot avail himself of such an expensive treatment, but every one can take those elements contained in thyroid secretions in some other form. And pray, you breathlessly ask, what are these other forms?

We must pause a moment to make it clear that the thyroid gland selects from the blood such elements as it requires wherewith to manufacture its miracle-working secretion, the value of which lies largely in the iodine it contains. And where does the blood procure the material from which the thyroid gland elaborates its wonder-performing secretion? Why, from the food we eat, of course. So, if we want to keep the body supplied with foods that contain a maximum of youth-sustaining elements, we should include in our daily diet some food having a large content of iodine.

All efforts at arriving at definite methods to stay the hand of time seem to work around a circle, and our remarks on iodine foods bring us back to Metchnikoff and his study of the large intestine. Metchnikoff's idea was to keep the blood in as pure a state as possible and to combat the effect of putrefactive changes in the large intestine, thereby overcoming the common condition of autointoxication, which, after all, is at the root of all premature decay.

Now comes another longevityist—he is past eighty—a Frenchman who advances the theory that one can prolong life in all its usefulness to the century mark by means of *daily rubbings*. This method is simply another way of *combating stagnation of fluids in the system*, for it is a scientific truth that most, if not all, our bodily ailments are caused by an accumulation in the system of toxic—poisonous matter.

We seldom breathe consciously. Very few persons who live indoors deliberately go to an open window during the day and practice breathing exer-

cises; much less do they go through daily systematic movements whereby the joints, muscles, and all the tissues are exercised. Because we neglect these things, fluids accumulate in the tissues and stagnate, so laying the foundation for much mischief, notably for premature decay, especially in persons of sedentary habits.

The aforementioned Frenchman advises every one who desires to live one hundred years to rub the body from head to foot every day, using the fingers to promote friction, and so create warmth. It is a method whereby an interchange of the body fluids is effected and rapid elimination promoted.

The system is supplied with a circulation concerning which little is known to the layman, because it is rarely alluded to by the physician. This is the lymphatic system.

The nutrition of the body goes on in the lymph spaces. Every cell in the body is literally bathed in lymph all of the time, lymph being that part of the blood containing the essentials to life in food and aim. Lymph must be in a state of perpetual motion like the blood itself; once every twenty-four seconds the whole volume of blood passes through the lungs, where it gives off its carbon dioxide—poisonous air, waste—and takes in oxygen—life.

Not only the lungs but every little cell in the body must breathe in order to live. Now some cells are never given the opportunity to breathe fully and freely, and are never bathed with pure lymph, but they are choked with poisonous gases and stagnate in the putrefactive fluids which result from ignorant and careless methods of living.

Premature old age is the slow product of this habitual condition. Any one can see how rubbing the body every day, as suggested by the old French doctor, would do a great deal of good, but there are better methods. Of

course, self-massage or massage of any kind eliminates waste, and it increases the volume of blood and lymph to the parts. In this way it hastens nutrition; the breathing capacity of every tissue handled is directly stimulated; waste and repair are greatly facilitated, and the blood-making organs are improved. Thus the entire system is energized and redeemed.

Massage is indeed a great revivifier, a great beautifier, but fresh air and sunshine are nature's rejuvenators. One of the most recent methods of restoring youth is that of Professor Steinach of Vienna, who employs the X ray. We might liken the X rays to concentrated brilliant sunlight combined with ozone. A similar effect is gained through daily systematic exercise in the open air. Upon no tissue in the body is the effect of conscious open-air breathing and exercise so pronounced and so needful as upon the heart and blood vessels, for the most important senile changes begin in these tissues. Especially to-day are conditions of arterio-sclerosis—hardening of the arteries—and of heart trouble causing health statisticians great concern.

One noteworthy disclosure in the study of longevity has to do with the kidneys. Just as the heart and blood vessels undergo senile changes only too rapidly, so the kidneys are marvelous organs in not undergoing any degenerative changes unless, of course, diseased. The rôle played by the kidneys is far greater than usually understood, and we cannot arrive at any simple, safe course of longevity without taking them into account. The chief function of the kidneys is to separate poisonous matter and toxins from the blood and pass this waste out of the body as rapidly as possible. But besides this, the kidneys perform another duty which ranks them with the ductless glands: they manufacture an internal secretion which regulates the amount

of poisons of a certain character which can safely be retained without causing serious trouble such as uræmia, for instance.

We are being poisoned continually, either by material we take in with food and drink, or by toxins formed in the body through one means or another. Recall the condition of autointoxication created by putrefactive matter in the intestinal canal. Now if it were possible for the kidneys to carry away the reabsorbed poison, a state of autointoxication would not exist. The kidneys take on the extra work thrown upon them by the intestines, but are unable to meet fully the condition. Much of it is thrown back into the system, therefore, until it pervades all the tissues and much mischief is set up. Overworked kidneys rebel in time; it all depends on their innate strength. How can the integrity of these highly important organs be maintained and old age warded off?

An American physician who has devoted his energies to studies and close observations on kidney conditions states that a meat diet or one containing much meat extract in the form of bouillon and gravies produces the greatest amount of harm upon the delicate structure of these glands.

An interesting fact and one of great importance is the taste most of us have developed for salt. It has been found that diseased kidneys are unable to carry off salt properly, and its retention leads to œdema—swelling. Salt should be taken in very small quantities, if we wish to preserve these organs; such foods as are insipid unless very highly seasoned might well be given up and others substituted.

Experiments show that potatoes cause a great elimination of salt by the kidneys, while rice shows hardly any, so rice should be employed in the dietary to a larger extent than it is and in place of potatoes; this is especially

important in cases of weak or diseased kidneys. Every one knows the deleterious influence of alcohol upon all the tissues of the body and notably in producing Bright's disease. All spices, adulterated sauces, tea, coffee, tobacco, by the poisons they contain, produce, in the course of many years pathological changes in the structure of the kidneys. Much of this can be combated, however, by drinking a great deal of water, at least six glassfuls daily, to assist the passage of poisonous substance through the kidneys.

Furthermore, the greatest care must be given to the condition of the skin and intestines if we wish to keep our kidneys in good order and prevent their deterioration. Daily bathing with friction to stimulate the sweat glands, also occasional vapor baths to produce the same effect, are advised, and of course there is daily activity of the intestinal tract. Hygiene of the kidneys, therefore, includes the general hygiene of the body, and whatever promotes its health naturally increases the effect for good of the entire ductless glandular system.

From the foregoing it must be plain to every one that the seeds of old age are laid in youth and are due to our own carelessness. If a simple life and a few hygienic rules rigidly adhered to will mold us over, why not exercise our will power toward so glorious an end? Youthful faculties, youthful buoyancy, and actual beauty far exceeding that of youth, because it bears the impress of a life beautifully lived, are all possible by observing a few simple, hygienic rules.

The following "Twelve Commandments for a Green Old Age" are given by the famous author of "Old Age Deferred":

1. To be as much as possible in the open air, and especially in the sunshine, and to take plenty of exercise, giving special care to deep breathing.

2. To live on a diet consisting of: meat once a day, eggs, cereals, green vegetables, fruit, raw milk of healthy cows, and to masticate properly.

3. To take a bath daily, and in addition, once a week or once every two weeks, to take a sweat bath, if the heart can stand it.

4. To have a daily action of the bowels, and in addition to take a purgative once a week if there is any tendency toward constipation.

5. To wear very porous underwear, preferably cotton; porous clothing, loose collars, light hats, if any, low shoes.

6. To go to bed early and to rise early.

7. To sleep in a very dark and very quiet room, and with a window open, and not to sleep less than six to six and one-half hours, or more than seven and one half, and for women eight and one half hours.

8. To have one complete day's rest in each week, without even reading or writing.

9. To avoid mental emotions, and also worries about things which have happened and cannot be altered, as well as about things which may happen. Never to say unpleasant things and to avoid listening to unpleasant things if possible.

10. To get married, and, if a widow or widower, to marry again.

11. To be temperate in the use of alcohol and tobacco, and also in the use of tea and coffee.

12. To avoid places which are overheated, especially by steam, and badly ventilated. To replace or reënforce the functions of the organs which may have become changed by age or disease, by means of the extracts from the corresponding organs of healthy animals; but only to do this under the *strict supervision of medical men* who are thoroughly familiar with the functions of the ductless glands.

NOTE: A list of foods containing iodine and other youth-sustaining elements will be furnished readers upon personal application.

WHAT READERS ASK

AMELIA D.—Yes, the use of a mixture of coarse meals, so often alluded to in these pages, is an excellent method for improving the complexion and skin in general. I have had many responses from grateful readers. If you want formula and directions, write me, inclosing a United States-stamped envelope for reply.

M. F.—Here is the formula for Oriental henna paste: Powdered henna leaves, one-quarter pound; acetic acid, four drams; powdered rhubarb, four drams; white honey, four drams. Add enough hot water to form a paste and apply. The length of time it is allowed to remain on the hair determines the tinge. The paste is then washed off with ammoniated water and the hair dried in the sun. This is the only stain that can be used on auburn shades, but it must always be applied skillfully, and the same preparation used each time, or the effect will vary and the results defeat one's object, which is to restore faded hair or to color characterless hair.

MISS FORD.—I believe you will find this

a grateful inhaling salt to relieve the peculiar waves of nauseating headaches that overcome you when nervous. It is called salts of lavender. Ammoniated lavender water, one and one-half ounces; oil of lavender, one-quarter ounce; spirits of ammonia caustic, six ounces.

AGNES.—The brows and eyelashes can be vastly improved with care and applications of tonic lotions. I will gladly send you formula with directions for using.

BESSIE LOVE.—Did you wish a reply by mail? If so, you failed to send a stamped envelope. It will give me much pleasure to send a special-lotion formula for hair that is dry and becoming darker. Rub white vaseline into the scalp every night for a week, then use the lotion, formula for which I will send upon hearing from you again. In regard to your neck: Yes, exercises will help to restore its contour, while bland creams will improve the texture of the skin. Here again you must wait until I write you privately, as there is an article upon this subject, describing and illustrating special

exercises, with which I will put you in touch if you will send your name and address on a stamped envelope.

Mrs. Orro S.—I have your letter concerning your little daughter, and would gladly send the advice you seek, but fail to find the necessary self-addressed, stamped envelope. Please write again, repeating your request.

MAYME D.—I regret to hear what has befallen your sister, but her age, and other things you tell me concerning her, makes one suspicious of the diagnosis. It is strange, but true, that one's family is prone to place the worst construction upon a seizure of this kind rather than admit that it might spring from hysteria. Hysteria is often at the root of paralytic attacks and can be recognized by the history, sex, age, and temperament of the patient; furthermore, in your sister's case all other causes, so far as I can judge, can be excluded.

J. J. E.—No, you do not require facial massage, nor should you use powder at your age. Yes, by all means dance—it is a delightful form of exercise—but do not overdo it, as you are growing fast and must conserve your strength. Weight will come by and by. You require ten hours' sleep. Live much in the open air and confine your diet to plain, wholesome fare.

Mrs. T. R. M.—It is an accepted fact that pleasurable emotions have a happy influence on the process of digestion. The old custom of exciting laughter at table by the employment of jesters was founded on a true physiological reason. Worry, anxiety, fright, or extreme excitement of various kinds have a depressing effect on digestion, not only in the stomach, but also in the intestines. There seems to be disturbance both of the circulatory and nervous systems. Nervous dyspepsia and loss of weight often follow prolonged anxiety. The faces of persons whose natures are highly emotional frequently wrinkle early. Take care at once to overcome this difficulty. A course of facial treatments would be very beneficial, or I will send directions for home treatment if you will address me, inclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope for same.

PROGRESSIVE.—Deep breathing should be practiced at all times, as only by this means can the blood be thoroughly oxygenated. We cannot live without oxygen, you know. Most of us exist on a minimum amount, in some fashion or another, when we could

live, and enjoy every moment of living, by simply filling the lungs constantly with pure air. If you wish, and will make proper application, I will gladly send a list of breathing exercises by mail.

PAINFUL.—Here is a formula for a salve to relieve all callous growths on the soles of the feet: Salicylic acid, one-half ounce; simple cerate, four ounces; mix well. This is to be applied on a piece of cloth every night for three or four nights, then followed with a hot foot bath, when the callous skin can be readily scraped off.

LETTY H.—After washing your hands always dry them thoroughly. For chapped hands apply this salve: Camphor, one ounce; bismuth—English, one-half dram; benzoinated zinc ointment, one ounce; ointment of rose water, sufficient.

B. A. B.—I am indeed glad that my department has helped you. If the bony structure of your nose is large, you can do nothing to reduce it. If it is simply fleshy, write me, and I will put you in touch with a reducing cream.

ALICE K.—Young girls may have dandruff, yes—but there is no reason why they should! Do you use a fine-tooth comb or a wire hairbrush or kitchen soap, borax, and so on, for a shampoo? Anything that irritates the scalp may produce dandruff. Furthermore, there are several varieties—dry, moist, greasy, and so on. Which is yours? Write me for advice on special treatment, not forgetting to inclose a stamped envelope.

FAILURE.—Acne is a skin disease of adolescence. While it tends to spontaneous cure when maturer years are reached, it often leaves the face deeply pitted and disfigured. Indeed, the markings frequently resemble the pittings resulting from a severe attack of smallpox. In many instances, like yours, the condition seems to resist all treatment, unless that embraces rigid hygienic measures carried out day by day. This I find the greatest stumblingblock to a successful termination of any endeavor in life, and especially when it is a question of overcoming harmful habits. If you are prepared to do this, write me further and I will gladly advise you.

SIXTEEN.—A girl of your age should not rouge. If you are anemic, you require a blood tonic. Write me more fully about your condition. Meanwhile, drink plenty of milk and live as much as possible in the open air.

Doctor Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send Canadian stamps or coins. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.

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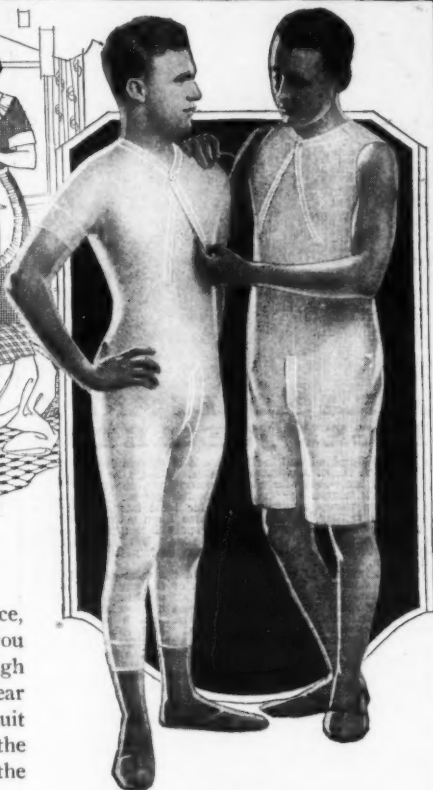
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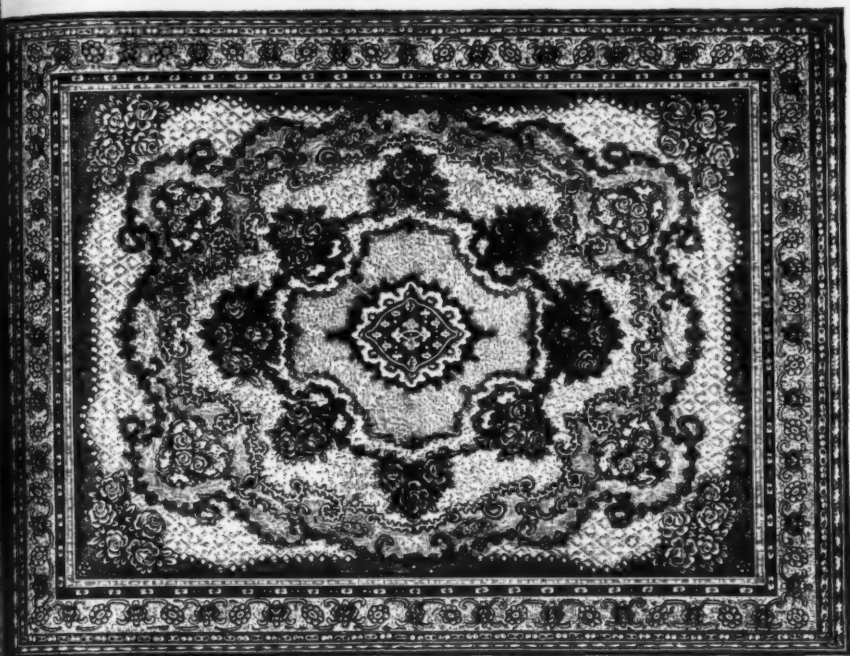
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PARKER'S HAIR BALSAM
Removes Dandruff—Stops Hair Falling
Restores Color and Beauty to Gray and Faded Hair
Use and \$1.00 at druggists.
Hiscox Chem. Wks., Patchogue, N.Y.

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Brings this Seamless Worsted Face Brussels Rug

Full Room Size, 9 Feet x 12 Feet

Only \$1 to send now—and we ship this magnificent seamless worsted face tapestry Brussels rug. Use it 30 days, then if not satisfied, return it and we refund the \$1 and pay transportation both ways. If you buy, take nearly a year to pay—a little every month. And note—the price is cut—you save over a third. Even before the war this rug would have been an amazing bargain at this phenomenally low price.

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Woven from Fine WORSTED Yarns One of the most artistic designs ever woven and the coloring is soft, rich and harmonious. Brown, tan, red, green and light colorings are beautifully blended. An attractive floral pattern with large medallion center surrounded with harmonizing floral sprays; finished with a pretty border. Made seamless, and the fine worsted yarns are selected for their long-wearing qualities. Full room size, 9 feet x 12 feet.

Order by No. 34CMA13. Price \$29.85. Send only \$1.00 now. Balance \$2.75 monthly.

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HARTMAN Furniture & Carpet Co.
3913 Wentworth Avenue
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Address.....

R. F. D..... Box No.....

Town..... State.....

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We want an agent in every community to use and introduce these wonderful tires at our astonishingly low prices to all motor car owners.

FREE TIRES for YOUR OWN CAR to a representative in each community. Write for booklet fully describing this new process and explaining our amazing introductory offer to owner agents.

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"I can hear you with the MORLEY PHONE." It is audible, weightless, comfortable, inexpensive. No metal, wires nor rubber. Can be used by anyone, young or old. The Morley Phone for the

DEAF

is to the ears what glasses are to the eyes. Write for Free Booklet containing testimonials of users all over the country. It describes causes of deafness; tells how and why the MORLEY PHONE affords relief. Over one hundred thousand sold.

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DON'T send a penny. Just say: "Send me a Lachnite mounted in a solid gold ring on 10 day's free trial." We will mail it prepaid right to your name. When it comes merely deposit \$4.75 with the postman and wear the ring for 10 full days. If you, or any of your friends can tell it from a diamond, send it back and we will return your deposit. But if you decide to buy it—send us \$2.50 a month until \$19.75 has been paid.

Write Today Send your name now. Tell us which of these Be sure to send your finger size.

Harold Lachman Co., 204 So. Peoria St., Dept. 1985 Chicago.

Dr. Lawton's Guaranteed FAT REDUCER

FOR MEN AND WOMEN

will show reduction taking place in 11 days or money refunded. The Reducer (not electrically) reduces unsightly parts promptly, reducing only where you wish to lose and the Lawton Method dissolves and eliminates superfluous fat from the system. Easily followed directions do not require exercises, starving, medicine or treatments; not only rids you of fat but improves appearance and general health, brings physical and mental vigor and enables you to regain and retain your normal weight. Dr. Lawton (shown in picture) reduced from 211 to 152 lbs. This reducer and genuine method have been the means whereby a great number of fat people throughout the United States and elsewhere have easily gotten rid of unhealthy, disfiguring fatty tissue without discomfort. Any stout man or woman can obtain these results whether 10 or 100 lbs. overweight, look better and feel better. The complete cost is \$5.00. Send for your reducer today. Remember it is guaranteed. Office hours 10-4 daily.



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\$250 -A- MONTH!

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You do not risk a penny. This beautiful watch will be sent you on 30 days Free Trial. A new deal for square people. Write now for this big special offer. A postal will do it in our own factory by

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6000 Mile Guarantee

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Tires are noted for their long wearing qualities. All are standard and makes reconstructions in our own factory by experts. 6,000 mile guarantee. These wonderfully long wearing tires must go at

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SMASHED PRICES			
30x9	\$ 6.90	34x4	\$11.10
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32x3 3/8	8.75	35x4 1/2	12.75
31x4	9.85	36x4 1/2	13.25
32x4	10.35	35x5	14.00
33x4	10.80	37x5	14.25

Free Tube & Reliner

State size wanted S. S. or Cl. Non-Skid or plain tread. Send only \$2.00 deposit, balance C. O. D. subject to examination. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Order To-day—Supply Limited. 5% discount if cash is sent with order.

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We do not expect those who are hard of hearing to take our word that the Acousticon will make them hear clearly once more—No one's word should be taken for that. We do expect, however, that for their own individual satisfaction, before giving up in discouragement, they will permit us to loan them the

1921 Acousticon For 10 Days' FREE TRIAL No Deposit—No Expense

400,000 delighted users have given us this permission to their relief and profit. Most of them had tried many other aids and treatments without avail—but the Acousticon has patented features which cannot be duplicated. So disregarding your past experiences, write for your free trial today.

Dictograph Products Corp.

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No. 3

No. 5

A Liznite Is Yours for the Asking

Keep it 10 Days Free
Wear a LIZNITE GEM RING and be the envy of your friends. See if you can tell it from a high priced diamond. Send your Name, Address and Number of Ring you want, and one of these wonderful LIZNITE GEM RINGS, with all the fire and sparkle of the finest diamond will be sent you by return mail.

Solid Gold Mountings
And all rings are hand engraved, set with full carat weight LIZNITE GEM.
Select the one you like best:
No. 1—\$21.50 2—\$17.50 3—\$15.50
No. 4—15.50 5—12.50

Sizes must be included when ordering.
When your LIZNITE GEM RING comes, pay the mail man \$4.50, balance \$10.00 monthly until paid. Money back any time within 10 days if not perfectly satisfied.
Get a Liznite Gem Ring Today
THE LIZNITE GEM COMPANY
"The House of Quality and Price"
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No. 2

No. 4



"I'm as Good a Man as Jim!"

"They made him manager today, at a fine increase in salary. He's the fourth man in the office to be promoted since January. And all were picked for the same reason—they had studied in spare time with the International Correspondence Schools and learned to do some one thing better than the rest of us.

"I've thought it all out, Grace. I'm as good a man as any one of them. All I need is special training—and I'm going to get it. If the I. C. S. can raise other men's salaries it can raise mine. If it can bring a better home with more comforts to Jim and his family it can do it for us. See this coupon? It means my start toward a better job and I'm going to mail it to Scranton tonight!"

Thousands of men now know the joy of happy, prosperous homes because they let the International Correspondence Schools prepare them in spare hours for bigger work and better pay. You will find them in offices, shops, stores, mills, mines, factories, on railroads—everywhere.

Why don't you study some one thing and get ready for a real job, at a salary that will give your wife and children the things you would like them to have?

You can do it! Pick the position you want in the work you like best and the I. C. S. will prepare you for it right in your own home, in your spare time—you need not lose a day or a dollar from your present occupation.

Yes, you can do it! More than two million have done it in the last twenty-nine years. More than 130,000 are doing it right now. Join them without another day's delay. Mark and mail this coupon!

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Explain, without obligating me, how I can qualify for the position, or in the subject, before which I mark X.

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<input type="checkbox"/> MINE FOREMAN OR ENGINEER
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<input type="checkbox"/> Common School Subjects
<input type="checkbox"/> ILLUSTRATING
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☐ Spanish
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in half the usual time, at trifling cost, with the wonderful OMNIGRAPH Automatic Transmitter. Sends you unlimited Morse or Continental messages, at any speed, just as an expert operator would.

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Insist upon a
"Bayer package,"
which contains
safe, proper
Directions.
Proved safe by
millions.

Bayer-Tablets of Aspirin

"Bayer" introduced Aspirin to physicians 20 years ago.

Handy tin boxes of 12 tablets cost but a few cents—Larger packages.
Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacture of Monoaceticacidester of Salicylicacid

No Money Down



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19 genuine Ruby and Sapphire jewels, solid gold center wheel, adjusted to positions, isochronism and temperature. Includes such railroad requirements as double roller escapement, steel escape wheel. Stem set guaranteeing absolute satisfaction. Substantial, guaranteed 50-year 12 or 16 size gold filled case. Sent without a penny down.

10 Days Free Trial

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A handsome, up-to-date, gold-filled chain and knife absolutely free. Choice of Dickens, Van or Waldemar (shown in cuts) chain. Glass which chain you wish.

14c a Day

Just send your name and address. The watch, chain and knife come to you by prepaid express. Give expressman \$4.00. This is merely a deposit. Wear the watch and chain absolutely free. If you don't wish to keep it return it at our expense and your deposit will be refunded instantly. You are not out one penny. Trial is absolutely free. If you keep the watch pay \$4.50 a month until full price, \$22.75 is paid.

Order Today on Trial

The supply is limited. Send your name now. No red tape or annoyances. You take no risk. Take this chance to have this splendid watch for less than 14c a day. Send your name now.
**J.M. LYON & CO. Dept. 1 Maiden Lane
1925 NEW YORK**

Stop Using a Truss



Yes, stop it, you know by your own experience it is only a make-shift, a false prop against a collapsing wall, and that it is undermining your health. Why, then, continue to wear it? Here is a better way, which means that tiresome, tortuous trusses can be thrown away forever, and it's all because Stuart's PLAPAD-PADS are different, being medicine applicators made self-adhesive purposely to prevent slipping and to afford an arrangement to hold the parts securely in place.

**NO STRAPS,
BUCKLES OR
SPRINGS
ATTACHED.**

cannot slip, so cannot chafe or press against the pubic bone.

Thousands have tested themselves in the privacy of the home, and report most obstinate cases cured—no delay from work. Soft as velvet—easy to apply—self-adhesive. Process of recovery is natural, so afterwards no use for trusses. Awarded Gold Medal International Exposition, Rome; Grand Prix, Paris. Write us today to prove it by sending TRIAL PLAPAD, FREE. Address, Plapad Laboratories, Block 27, St. Louis, Mo.

Shave, Bathe and Shampoo with one Soap.—Cuticura

Cuticura Soap is the favorite for safety razor shaving.

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Whatever you select will be sent pro-
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THE NATIONAL CREDIT JEWELERS

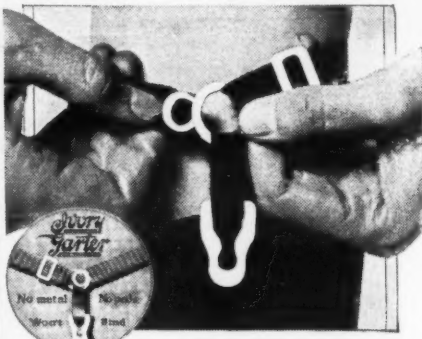
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**Loftis
Peerless
Diamond Ring**
Has the appearance of
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we are asking. All White
Gold, resembling platinum.
No. 219 now offered at
**\$100 \$20 Down
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Also special bargains in
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IT is genuine economy to buy
Ivory Garters. They wear
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thru the fabric—no dead cloth
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"Ivory Garters". You'll find that
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TO PAY**

See this beautiful

MEISTER PIANO

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Eight exquisite styles to choose from and the one
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30 DAYS FREE TRIAL—ALL FREIGHT PREPAID

If you like the piano we will sell it to you on small
monthly payments to suit your convenience as low as
\$9 per month. No cash deposit asked. No interest on
payments. No extras of any kind. Steel free with
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ested in player-pianos and for free catalog. We have
a fine selection. **Rothschild & Co., Dept. 30 Chicago**

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Trade Mark
This Trade-mark identifies
genuine Boss Work Gloves.
Be sure it is on every pair you buy.



Boss Work Gloves in the garden

YOU have all of the fun and none of the blisters when you wear Boss Work Gloves for gardening. They protect your hands from dust, dirt, and minor injuries.

Boss Gloves are tough enough for the most rugged work. Yet, they are so

flexible that you can wear them to pull the smallest weeds.

Around the auto, too, Boss Gloves are useful in a dozen ways. They are made of the finest quality white canton flannel. In sizes for men and women, boys and girls. Ribbed, band, and gauntlet wrists. Your dealer sells them.

THE BOSS MEEDY—best quality, medium weight canton flannel.

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The Boss line includes highest quality leather-palm, jersey, ticking, and canton flannel gloves and mittens.

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Kodak as you go.

Eastman Kodak Company, Rochester, N.Y., *The Kodak City*



"The milk-white pearls of the necklace which she (Amy Robsart) wore . . . were excelled in purity by her teeth."

—*Kentworth, by Sir Walter Scott*

"I saw for an parted lips, the g pearly teeth."

—*The Woman in the Mirror*

"The tugman's lips giving a flashing glim big, straight, white teeth."

—*Don Merrieth, by L...*

"Her teeth were white, and most of t when her red lips s"

—*The Trail of the Lonesome P...*

"She smiled time and showe teeth."

"She is so really very playful and full of fun, and then, have you noticed her pretty mouth and teeth?"

—*Tyld, Maurice Maeterlinck*

The Charm of Heroines

AN author, with his power to make his heroine what he wishes, thoughtfully endows her with beautiful teeth.

Strong, clean, white teeth add charm to a smile—even more truly in life than in books.

The smile worth while is a Colgate smile—have you one? Colgate's Ribbon Dental Cream used regularly and thoroughly twice-a-day makes for clean, healthy, beautiful teeth.

Colgate's is neither gritty, nor over-medicated. It *cleans*—efficiently, pleasantly and safely.

The delicious flavor of Colgate's makes it easy to acquire the good habit of twice-a-day care. Children use it without urging.

COLGATE & CO. NEW YORK

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Do most authors call them "pearly?"

Notice as you read — and send us a quotation, describing pretty teeth, whether "pearly" or not. We will send a free trial tube of Ribbon Dental Cream in return—but only one to a person. Give title, author and page with your quotation. Colgate & Co., Dept. A, 199 Fulton St., New York.



Colgate's is recommended by more dentists than any other



pearls of
she (Amy
were

"I saw for an instant
parted lips, the gleam of
pearly teeth."

—*The Woman in the Mirror*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald

"The tugman's lips parted,
giving a flashing glimpse of
straight, white teeth."

—*Dan Merril's*, by Laurence Irving

"Her teeth were even
white, and most of them flashed
when her red lips smiled."

—*The Trail of the Lonesome Pine*, by John G. Saxe

"She smiled for the
time and showed her
teeth."

—*Chatterbox*,
by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings

playful
n, have
mouth

Mastermind



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